

himself the peer of such correspondents as Ampère, Berzelius, Liebig and Gerstedt. In the presence of the young Maxwell he clearly feels inspired, but in a sense outclassed, and he could see that he was one of the last of a generation of physicists capable of making great theoretical progress with a minimum of mathematics. He asked Maxwell: "When a mathematician engaged in investigating physical actions and results has arrived at his own conclusions, may they not be expressed in common language as fully, clearly, and definitely as in mathematical formulae?" Paraday here has many modern sympathizers, and not merely among those incapable of understanding Maxwell. Faraday's letters, admirably edited and indexed, quite adequately annotated, and excellently printed, are never more interesting than when we catch him in the act of manipulating alternative concepts to produce a coherent theory of electrical phenomena. Many of the letters he seems to have written only to sort out his own thought, and often he seems to be talking to himself as much as to his correspondent. The resulting atmosphere is one of disengagement from the affairs of man as a political being, and no doubt his otherworldliness explains something of his own modesty.

As a young medical student, Huxley had approached the great man outside the Royal Institution with a scheme for producing perpetual motion. Faraday gently knocked the idea on the head, but he confirmed Huxley in his ambition to live by science. Huxley could see the difficulty, however, as he confided to his fiancée in the year of the Great Exhibition of 1851:

To attempt to live by any scientific pursuit is a farce. Nothing but what is absolutely practical will go down in England. A man of science may earn great distinction, but not bread. He will get invitations to all sorts of dinners and conversations, but not enough income to pay his cab fare.

By 1851, Huxley had already taken part in a voyage of exploration in the South Seas, as an assistant naval

surgeon aboard HMS Rattlesnake. Researches begun on this voyage established, for example, the group of coelenterata (two-layered jellyfish), and entailed a fundamental revision of the classification of the mollusca and ascidians (which Kowalevsky was subsequently able to show to have an affinity with the vertebrates). This was the work of a fine intellect, if not in the highest class. As Cyril Bibby explains, Huxley was no great experimenter, although a skilled dissection and draughtsman. But above all, his work was essentially critical and synthetic, ranging easily over his own as well as over previous discoveries. While still on the voyage, he had sent back his researches at intervals in the form of substantial papers to learned journals, and almost immediately on his return he was elected FRS. This, of course, brought him no bread. He was given three years' leave of absence, but was at length struck off the Navy List, and went to teach at the School of Mines (later the Royal College of Science), where he stayed for most of his life. He declined a chair at Oxford, on the grounds that a man used to the freedom of London might be unsuitable for it, and later he declined the position of Master of University College, Oxford. To his son Leonard he explained, "I do not think I am cut out for a Don nor your mother for a Donesse, and it is hard to reconcile the idea of an Oxford college accepting Huxley as its head, with his notorious lack of belief in revealed religion. (His choice of metaphors is well exemplified in his comment on the ceremony of baptism as "a kind of spiritual vaccination without which the youngsters might catch sin in worse forms as they grow up.")

Dr Bibby opens his book—his fourth to deal with Huxley—on a wildly extravagant note, describing his subject, for instance, as "perhaps the most brilliant and certainly the most influential scientist of the century", and suggesting that in him England lost "the most powerful scientist she has ever known". This is uncharacteristic of the biography

as a whole, which is presented with an absolute minimum of value-judgment, and which does not cease to be entertaining as long as Huxley is there standing in the background, and more especially as long as Huxley is allowed to speak for himself.

A first-class biologist Huxley certainly was, but his reputation as a great controversialist, a sort of Socratic gadfly, was well deserved. "Controversy is as abhorrent to me as gin to a reclaimed drunkard," Huxley told John Murray, Gladstone's biographer, in 1878, a few years before he had occasion to cut in shreds Gladstone's interpretation of the Book of Genesis. Not for nothing was Huxley known as Darwin's bulldog. This triumph over Bishop Wilberforce is well known, but chiefly because his ready wit coined a memorable line (the phrases he is supposed to have used are as varied as the accounts are numerous), namely that descent from an ape is preferable to descent from an intelligent and influential prelate who chooses to abuse his gifts. Less familiar is Huxley's triumph over some ideas of a scientifically wrong-headed opponent, Sir Richard Owen. Owen held that a small structure known as the pyramus minor occurred only in the human brain, and when Huxley proved its existence in the brain of the gorilla, he refused to give way with good grace. He remained our leading comparative anatomist, but he was wrong, and Huxley's reputation was notched up by several points. The timid Darwin, sixteen years older than he, was grateful for an alliance.

Huxley turned his talent for controversy in many directions. He campaigned for working-class education, and at the very end of his life joined the movement for turning London into a professional university. He had no wish to found an "Established Church Scientific" with a "Professorial Episcopate", which some of his fellow campaigners seem to have had in mind. Some of them must have worried whether they had been wise in allowing him to lead their cause

when he expatiated in *The Times* (1882) on the danger of government by professors only, when the professoriate was bound to include men "ignorant of the commonest conventions of official relations, and content with nothing if they cannot get everything their own way". As always, he made his pronouncement only after having first anatomized a few chosen specimens.

Dr Bibby does not anatomize quite as much as the case merits, his biography is highly readable, and with its eighteen portraits of Huxley it provides us with a veritable flick-over picture of a man's life. A. J. Meadows writes his biography of Norman Lockyer, whom he chooses to compare with Huxley, in a much lower key. Lockyer was a man of great vigour and he left behind him a mountain of relevant papers. In his capacity as first editor of Macmillan's journal *Nature* he corresponded with an enormous number of scientists. He wrote a great deal himself, much of it at what might now be somewhat unkindly regarded as a semi-professional level. He left his mark on the British Association, the Royal Astronomical Society, the Royal Society, and the South Kensington Museum, to name but a few of the dioceses within Huxley's "established Church Scientific". Confronted by this mass of material for a biography, Professor Meadows has meticulously put it in order, duly added his references, and generally left behind one of those granite Victorian monuments which will not be easily eroded.

His portrait is honest. Lockyer was, like Huxley, a born controversialist, but was as often wrong as he was right. If he frequently speculated on scientific matters, it was not that he did so without reason, but that his reasons were too often insubstantial. He did valiant work in spectroscopy, using the spectroscopic effects, and making important discoveries in the process; and yet for many years he was as active in maintaining that the Sun's corona, visible during an eclipse, was an

optical effect produced by the sun's atmosphere. He was the evolution of the man which were less speculatively possible to say, in common ideas, that they "reasoned" in such and such a line. There is a much better Lockyer's "discovery" of cathode rays, which is easily recognized as a discovery of cathode rays, some small way of being beyond the evidence of plain mistakes (as when Henry Roscoe's advice to Lockyer was "get thee to Scotland"). He claimed to have composed the pure metal, but to have obtained hydrogen (process).

But Lockyer, right or wrong as the patient—which explains the hostility of his more orthodox colleagues, who are mostly paid by the state or by harassed families to turn goats into sheep and black sheep into white sheep and get them all into the same pen as quickly and cheaply as possible for sale back to those who sent them as prime lamb.

In the essays and interviews that make up this symposium there are indications that his fellow psychiatrists now find even the writings of Laing's heyday rather hard to swallow. "I read and reread," says Robert Coles, "and I can't make it disturbing in view of the fact, confirmed by a glance around any campus bookshop, that Laing's books are now a cult among the young. Theodore Lidz, commenting on a passage in *The Politics of Experience*, says:

I think that Laing, the man who wrote those lines, is in such a despairing state that he shouldn't do therapy. I don't think I could treat patients if I were in such a depression. . . . I think he's way off base.

Ironically, in view of his own theories of how we can force sick roles on others, Laing seems to be being gently shoved by his colleagues into the role of patient. A student visited him in exile and reported that "he had a very quiet thoughtful time talking with him and the interview was conducted in eminently sensible and rational terms. . . . This seems to imply that he expected something rather different. Those whom psychiatrists wish to destroy they first make mad. . . ."

The unconscious humour that is the most delightful feature of this book should not distract the more fitful reader from some sensible consideration of Laing's work and some frankly baffled discussion of the dilemmas of psychiatry in general. (Much of this is in the form of taped interviews and chats. This cheap and unimpressive way of filling books results in some tedious prose.) But overlaying all the genuine concern there is a forced charity that becomes a little unctuous. One colleague can "admire Laing and yet be glad that I'm not doing what he does". Laing is guilty of a kind of romanticism, but a brilliant thinker, gifted with a good blaise. "Poor Ronnie. . . . It is as though a vicar on trial for sacrilege were being defended on the grounds that he was well liked in the parish."

Laing has had considerable influence. It might be said by his enemies that, like many successful doctors, he has invented a disease and made it so fashionable that all the best people are catching it. His friends might reply that great advances have been made in medicine by doctors who have observed groups of symptoms not previously connected, and that Laing's Syndrome will one day take its place in the textbooks in the honourable company of Landry's Paralysis, Lasague's Sign, Lasso's Paste, Lenzhart's Diet, Lison's Spirit, Lutz's Disease, Lorenz's Operative, Ludwig's Angina and Lugo's Solution.

Unfortunately the sort of secular retreat that Laing is so expensive than pills or electricity and might become the privilege of a mad elite—like those well-known professional lunatics who are always popping up on the Laingian platform to describe their regeneration with a literate fluency that must be annoying to psychiatrists who have to cope with the less distinguished patients on the average ward.

The only socially just solution would seem to be the establishment of a chain of National Health monasteries. Laing would make an excellent abbot; but as he has said, it might be difficult to find suitable staff. One thing is certain: should a Laingian community come into being, it will have to endure, like the Society of Jesus, a lot of malice from its own hierarchy.

PSYCHIATRY

Physician, Heal thyself

BY ROBERT COLES and ROBERT LIDZ (Editors): *Laing and Anti-Psychiatry* Penguin Education. Paper, 40p.

A dotty psychiatrist has been a staple addition to our comic repertoire, dating probably from the time when a generation of conscripts who contact with certain unflattering officers who were bad at returning salutes. The mad doctor has been kept alive by this madman's reckless disregard for his own image. The Church, in its own language incomprehensible to the faithful know of the squabbles that lead to the election of a pope or two of smoke from St. Peter's chimney. The decline of the Church of England may have been caused in part by its rash habit of publishing a verbatim report of the proceedings of Convocation—such an open sale at 37p, must be secretly subsidized by the State. Secular Society as anti-church propaganda.

Psychiatrists cannot learn from the history of the church, they consider the prudent front by their medical colleagues. A conference could a patient in a doctor who came to his head fresh from a conference of the RMA where the most respected of the profession had widely stated their almost total ignorance of the causes of the diseases, their suspicion of orthodox treatments, their doubts about the value of hospitals, drugs and medicines, and even the value of putting a sick man to bed and taking his temperature?

The latest public washing of psychiatry linen is a series of interviews on the work of D. Laing. Long suspected by fellow-workers of heresy and by political squabblers of apostasy, Laing seems now in danger of outright chaos. If analysts were analysed and public burnings confined to self-immolation, Laing would be being pilloried out of the Tavistock Clinic. Laing, at the time when this book was published, where he was doing a course of meditation, was "doing better, much better, than long-term meditation experts". He had no plans to return to psychiatry, nor to write anything. "In that vague manner," a visitor reported, "he indicated that, if ever he writes again, it will be from the viewpoint of meditation consumption."

This evidence Peter Sedgwick opens for the Holy Office, who frowns at the mouth.

Indeed, has not only broken his bridges but burned them, including not only those who have linked him with his friends and colleagues, but also those which connect him over many years with the International Left. For, in the midst of the nameless warfare of the day, the only way to survive is to have a country's revolution against the country's revolution, to reproduce many of the same patterns, one can only begin to see the position of a Leftist in the Third World.

Thirties who decided to go off to a Catholic monastery at Burgos, Franco's lines, at the outbreak of the Spanish civil war, was not always a bad idea. In this case, what Laing has now returned from what he has described in a recent review as the most relaxing holiday he has had for years, thus the many over-eager detractors of his work. He has plans to set up a therapeutic community where people work through their problems without being doped or shocked, or treated or made to feel that they are in the wrong. Laing has always been that the society and society may be just as

POSTAGE: INLAND 6p OVERSEAS 10p

The biological and the theological

JACQUES ROGER: *Les Sciences de la vie dans la pensée française du XVIIIe siècle*. 848pp. Paris: Armand Colin. 95fr.

Some of the most penetrating studies of the history of the life sciences in the eighteenth century have been written by scholars who have disowned any specialist knowledge of science. Like Daniel Morner, more than fifty years before him, Jacques Roger is a distinguished representative of this tradition. A man who describes himself as neither a biologist nor a philosopher, he was brought to the subject by his literary interests, in particular by his study of Balzac, and he states that one of his main aims in writing this book was to provide material for a history of literature. Certainly *Les Sciences de la vie* provides ample material for the literary historian, but since its first appearance in 1963 it has become a standard work of reference for philosophers and historians of science also.

That the biological thought of the eighteenth century has attracted intellectual historians of so many different kinds is not surprising. For from the time of John Ray to that of Darwin the study of living creatures and plants was pre-eminently the province of the theologian. In important ways it entered the lives of philosophers like Rousseau and Diderot, of clerics like the Abbé Pluche and Gilbert White, and of virtually all those who in the nineteenth century came to be called naturalists. And this is to say nothing of the more systematic students of nature, like Stephen Hales, Linnaeus, and Buffon, all of whom were widely read. Given that the motives for making contact with the living world were so diverse, it is clear that the writing of a successful history of eighteenth-century biology is an unusually difficult task, demanding all the qualities of the polymath which M. Roger has in such abundance.

The thesis of the book rests on the significance of two dates: 1670 and 1745. By 1670, with the Aristotelians routed, the scientific revolution of the seventeenth century was over. Of course, debates still raged, Cassendi and other corpuscularians

had already proposed their alternative to the Cartesian plenum, and Newton's denunciation of the a priori mechanisms of Descartes was imminent. But the supporters of the new philosophy were almost as one in their belief that the world (organic as well as inorganic) was intelligible, being subject to unvarying natural laws which, at least in principle, the human mind could comprehend. Sadly, as the next seventy years were to show and in a way that was characteristic of so many other new ideas of the seventeenth century, the mechanical universe raised more problems than it solved for the present science of biology. In particular, confidence in the efficacy of rational inquiry was eroded by such observers as Leuvenhoeck, Réaumur, and Bonnet, whose studies of minute animals revealed structures and processes of unimaginable complexity and so demonstrated the inadequacy of Cartesian-style mechanisms. In the despair that ensued, thoroughgoing empiricism seemed the only refuge, and so it was that the mere observation of nature came to be accepted as a worthy end in itself in the early eighteenth century.

However, the new empiricism had its Achilles' heel too. In an age when theologians in France almost as much as in England, looked to nature for an assurance of the existence of God, it was all too tempting to delight in ignorance, for it appeared only proper that man should be incapable of understanding fully the handiwork of the Divine architect. In one of the cleverest parts of his book M. Roger relates this almost beseeching helplessness before the mysteries of creation to the success in the doctrine of pre-existence. According to this doctrine, which was reconcilable equally with the ovism of de Graaf and with Leuvenhoeck's newly discovered spermatozoa, all the organs of an adult were thought to exist in miniature in the seed from which it grew. Moreover, this seed already contained the seeds of all subsequent generations. As M. Roger argues, those who followed Swammerdam in supporting this doctrine were adhering to the well-tried traditions of natural theology, since they were effectively invoking

God, who fashioned the first seed at the Creation, as an explanatory device. In fact, pre-existence was, scientifically, not an explanation at all, and its weaknesses were ruthlessly exposed as, from about 1745, "theological" natural history faced the onslaught of men like Buffon and Lavoisier who could never be reconciled to ignorance.

Les Sciences de la vie offers far

Fish and the future

COLIN MOORCRAFT: *Must the Seas Die?* 219pp. Temple Smith. £2.50 (paperback, £1.25).

Some circumstantial evidence is very convincing, said Thoreau, as when you find a trout in the milk. Certainly, marine ecology reeks heavily on this kind of evidence. It is not invariably convincing, yet predictions are both necessary and possible. One set of predictions currently engaging public attention concerns the destruction of life in the sea, for which Paul Ehrlich found sufficient evidence to forecast in his article "Ecological Catastrophe" that "the end of the ocean (Mediterranean) came late in the summer of 1979". The most sophisticated of recent gloomy predictions concerning the planet's future were set forth earlier this year by the Club of Rome in their document *The Limits to Growth*, a study carried out at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and based on computer simulation of social and economic trends.

There has, however, been serious criticism of the validity of the assumptions made by Professor D. L. Meadows and his MIT colleagues (for example in the pages of *Nature*), especially in the programme's selection of "trends". The outcome of man's fecklessness, whether the wrath of God or the

more than its title would suggest. It treats the seventeenth century in almost as much detail as the eighteenth century; it is not concerned exclusively with French thought (how could it be when English natural theology was so influential in France?); and, far from being a mere history of theories of natural generation, it serves as an introduction to most of the leading problems of eighteenth-century thought.

Of the short-term goal, he says, chiefly the middle ground. The industrialized world, he argues, is a world of a broad-based economy, and recommends various measures for individuals and nations, including not only those which have linked him with his friends and colleagues, but also those which connect him over many years with the International Left. For, in the midst of the nameless warfare of the day, the only way to survive is to have a country's revolution against the country's revolution, to reproduce many of the same patterns, one can only begin to see the position of a Leftist in the Third World.

In *Must the Seas Die?* Colin Moorcraft shows himself as sympathetic to the views of the Roman Clubmen, in a restrained and reasonable manner. There is a tendency to heighten the drama with short sentences, but it must be admitted that the vast, rolling oceans can no longer be thought of as limitless sources or receptacles. The major dangers, pollution and over-exploitation, deserve constant reiteration, not because people and governments are unaware of them, but because it is still an unfamiliar notion for a people to choose its government primarily on the basis of its conservation platform, rather than on the basis of its economic goals. It is perhaps significant that the environmental action movement has been largely composed of people assured

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The prime of Hugh MacDiarmid

The Hugh MacDiarmid Anthology

Edited by Michael Grieve and Alexander Scott
205pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul. £3.25.

To present this book in a review that will do it justice in the eyes of most readers is still equivalent to presenting the *Collected Poems of T. S. Eliot* with little or no prior knowledge of *The Waste Land* or "Ash Wednesday". MacDiarmid's *Waste Land* is a *Drunk Man Looks at the Thistle* (1926)—uncertain in some of its aims, and diffuse as Eliot's poem is not, but as inventive stylistically and in touch with a greater experience of life. (The main value of this new selection is that it prints a *Drunk Man* complete and without the silly subtleties that were thought up for the *Collected Poems* of 1962.) MacDiarmid's "Ash Wednesday" is the family of poems he wrote between 1930 and 1934 in which the country and people of his upbringing were recreated, with an unforced freshness like Wordsworth's early in *The Prelude*, in order to sum them and sit them through and define their abiding essence at a time when the poet felt anxiously aware of "falling powers".

Quiet has come into my soul.
Life's tempest is done,
I lie at last.
A bird clift under the midnight sun,
Or again:
These beds of bracken, climax of the
summer's growth,
Are elemental as the sky or sea.
In still and sunny weather they give
back
The sun's glare with a fixed
intensity

As of steel or glass
No other foliage has.
Ah! well I know my tumultuous days
now at their prime
Will be brief as the bracken too in
their stay
Yet in them as the flowers of the
hills mid the bracken
All that I treasure is needs hidden
away

And will also be dead
When its rude cover is shed.
The point is not that MacDiarmid
has the final sureness of artistry that
Eliot commanded at least until 1930,
or Years in the prime typified by
"Among School Children". Every
aside by which Years touches in that
ordinary personal stance—the
"sixty-year-old smiling public man"
—from which he carries on his deep
meditation—"what youthful mother
a shape upon her lap/honey of
generation had betrayed"—occurs
as naturally as a self-interruption or
second-thought in a Shakespearean
soliloquy. MacDiarmid's counterpart
would be "Water of Life" or "By
Wauchopside" (the second is
dumbfoundingly left out of this an-
thology). In "Water of Life" Mac-
Diarmid can move from diction
steeped in sensuality—

Ah, vivid recollection o' trudge!
Crab-like again upon the ocean
flair—
Just as in lyin' wi' a woman still,
I feel a sudden cant and sweesh
ance mair
Frae Sodom or Gomorrah wi' yon
Eastern whore
T'oor watery grave o' yore
—to a sceptical detachment:
She clung to me mair tightly at
the end
Than ane expects or wants in
sic a caso
Whether frae love or no?
medna say,
A waste o' guid material...

—which shocks morally after the
seemingly relish of what went before
and so opens the way for the lucid
generalizing that follows. But in the
event this later stage verges on the
asserted, obvious, and therefore
(rhythmically) forced:

Nae gulfs that open 'neath nor
feet'll find
Us haily at a loss if we just keep
The perspective the deluge should
ha' gien's...

The point is that to make up your

pondering of an important oeuvre
which in Scotland has been received
with battery and in England with
neglect.

The best of MacDiarmid is now
available, in the Penguin *Selected
Poems* (1970) and in this new selec-
tion which prints three times as much
poetry as the Penguin for thirteen
times the price. A quarter of the
space goes on the complete *Drunk
Man* but another quarter on the work
since about 1936. By that time the

Afternoons

Clouds massing over the uneasy clims
Dull the slow walk home from school
The heavy cows are moving through the buttercups
To the sheltering hedge
And alders, clouds and banks of balsam hang
Muted, upside down in the reeds and slimy lily stems
Of the glassy brown river, the gloomier world
Of an old varnished painting.

The afternoon brightened by a bullfinch
Wearing the morning's warning sky
In fiery pink and blue on breast and wings.
We will look back on this and think
How happy we ought to have been then.

SHENA MACKAY

mind about MacDiarmid's explora-
tory poems and *A Drunk Man* and
the "Hymns to Lenin" by using an
touchstones Yeats's "Byzantium"
poems or *The Waste Land* or *The
Mask of Anarchy* not only keeps true
to critical standards but helps the

flow of rhythm and imagery had
tragically given way to the lamest
didacticisms and refigurations. For
the period 1925-35 the two selec-
tions so nearly overlap that we can
say that this, the heart of Mac-
Diarmid's work, has now been criti-

The crop of death

PETER PORTER:

Preaching to the Converted
61pp.

After Martial

48pp.
Oxford University Press. Paperback,
£1 each.

One thing that has become increas-
ingly obvious in Peter Porter's work
is that he is not primarily a satirist
but an elegiac poet. Death broods
above and behind his poems with a
suffocating presence, and it is the
horror of this that seems to deter-
mine his pessimistic, blackly humor-
ous attitude to the things of this
world. Whenever he appears to be
speaking in his own person (and he
used to be a great one for making
direct references to himself—*A
Porter Folio*, "Porter" rhyming with
"aorta"; there is a deliberate, chill-
ing gap between the maker and the
thing made. The gap can, in *Preach-
ing to the Converted*, be seen as that
which lies between the gaze of eter-
nity and our mortal existence.

Mr Porter is thus a very serious
poet, for all his skill as an on-
tologist.

Really, he's more frivolous who
thinks poetry
demands portentousness, that some
subjects
are proper to the Muse and others
aren't.
This is the voice of Martial as mod-
ernized epigrams in *After
Martial*, and it is a voice that often
elegantly matches Porter's own—sar-
donic, wryly humorous, full of the
names of things, often scabrous, al-
ways unapologetically serious. Here too
death is the measure of all things:
Small and select, the restaurant
called *The Mouthful*
Overlooks Caesar's tomb and you
may view
The sacred domes with garlic on
your breath;

Wine and dine there if you've got
the pull,
See and be seen, for even as you
chew,
The God Augustus welcomes you
to death.

It is a happy chance that has
brought these two learned and
lively poets together. Mr Porter
is at great pains to call them
versions, reworkings and remodel-
ings, but one is in fact seldom in
doubt about what he is up to. The
anachronisms (at random, *Fortu-
num's The Sunday Times*, postwar
credit, Kama Sutra birds, Black
Mountain lyrics) put Martial's
horror of this world rather than distract-
ing from it. The absurdities of
fashion, sexual behaviour, boasting,
snobism, hypochondria are con-
stants; the only variables are the
names and faces. And underneath it
all is the realization that

death
has the best of ever-hearing crops.

In both books the range of
manner is very wide, from cryptic
and oblique free verse to formal
and even stately structures. *Preach-
ing to the Converted* develops an
oracular and edifying tone which
has always been Porter's but
which now moves in a more grandly
stately way in "Between Two
Towns" and "A Hint from Aristotle".
For example, and sometimes the
stateliness sheds its runic quality
and becomes straightforwardly sen-
suous and poignant, as in "Fossil
Gathering", which moves towards
this exalted conclusion:

A Little Guide in Chelms tells us
how
These creatures sank in their
unconscious time,
That life in guinea leaves a hush the
plough
Or amateur collector can displace,
That every feeling thing ascends
from alme
To selfhood and in dying finds a
face.
All that survives this Totenreich,

ally established. But what
make of editing that produces
meaning run of the *Spies
War poem The Battle Cry*

I saw you dedicate yourself
And arise out of your flesh
In a divine frenzy
Drawn up towards the infinity
In a mystic ecstasy...
—to the fiercely cogent epig-
ram "Third Hymn to Lenin".
Clever—and yet we cannot
this problem
Civilised—and flaming out
Christian—in flat defiance
Proud of our country with the
sewer at our door.

It was also a mistake to
out-of-the-way and rather
sources such as *Poems to be
by William Shakespeare* (1936)
failing, like all predecessors
in the two or three volumes
of 1921-22 that have ap-
peared in a book. The
has been pulled out of days
editors' loyal wish to dig
"half-century of MacDiarmid's
career" (foreword). The
lasted for fifteen years (the
the moment of its first
is described at first hand
powerfully actual even
of the poet's son Michael

The great long poem in
Art scrunched so hard
of desperate irritation
that it destroyed the
front fire like a cannon
ing red sparks could
grow black on the book
very tightness, however,
from extinction, the
ten-coloured to a tiny
mother—an eye to the
of creativity—burned
ignoring the angry
urged its abundance
nerveless reaches of
personal hell.

illusionment, idealism has been in-
separable from politics and the new
committee is clearly doomed to
failure—yet, as a bridgehead to
repair the relationship with Alan, it
may offer freedom from guilt.

Olivia drifts into her old role of
coping, though with growing despair
and panic; not merely with a new
baby, but with Polly who loses hers,
with her mother's emotional black-
mail, with her stepson and his girl,
with a dying Polish refugee writing
his history of the Jews in the attic,
with old friend Tim, now insane and
threatening mayhem—and, overrid-
ing all else, with Bob's tortured
withdrawal beyond her help or com-
prehension. His break with the
party, dominating the book, crystal-
lizes a much wider reorientation of
the 1950s; to be told "Con-
rade, you no longer exist" is to
divorce his belief in freedom from
all his life has meant, yet still to be
haunted—in reality as well as night-
mare—by spies from the past. For
the Left, how to judge Burgess and
Maclean, the McCarthy purges, the
horrors of Stalin's last years, Czecho-
slovakia?

In focusing what is clearly
intended as a symbolic gesture of

All in perspective

MUS BARRETT:

Private View
256pp. Michael Joseph. £2.50.

Carefully contrived use of the well-
tried device of telling the same story
through different characters. Seldom
more cunningly done; not only
do the characters dovetail neatly,
illuminate each other, but between
them they wrap up the small mys-
tery that is the nub of the plot—
not to be revealed here, any more
than the murderer in a whodunit.
Enough to say that it is a little-or-

didn't-the-dunit, that it is set most
naturalistically in a Cornish artists'
colony, and that its solution is in-
volved with the revelation of charac-
ter rather than with a clue or two.
It is indeed basically a comparison
of character: of the kind who,
through submission to fear, has no
action left in him, and the kind who
always moves forward, even at the
risk of making a mistake. The
private view of the title refers not
only to the art exhibition that
climaxes the story but to these
private viewpoints, which are made
subtly but vividly clear. Highly pro-
fessional and enjoyable.

Withdrawal symptoms On the anvil

ALAN SILLITOE:

Raw Material
189pp. W. H. Allen. £2.

Nobody will begrudge a novelist his
escape from conventional forms; but
here it is as if Alan Sillitoe, having
vaulted the barbed-wire that fences
out the fictional domain, had found
himself incapable of doing more
than inspect the variegated drab-
nesses of the No-Man's Land beyond.
Raw Material discursively en-
shrines his indecision, and it is a
forlorn and ragged book.

The fault lies not in the formal
haphazardness of the work, frankly
described as a "mish-mash" by an
unusually desperate blurb-writer,
but in its apparent assumption that
"truth" lies somewhere between
autobiographical fact and imaginat-
ive invention, paring of the
mysteries of both. It is an assump-
tion that is already developing into
neurosis on the third page of the
book: "No matter what I call this
book, everything written is fiction,
even non-fiction—which may be the
most fictional non-fiction of all."

There is no way in which this defini-
tion-game can avoid developing into
vague, sub-philosophical disputation,
and indeed such even-numbered
chapters in the early part of the book
lapse into this lamentably turgid
mode. By Chapter 14 we have
reached the stage where: "All one
can believe in is the falsity of truth,
and start again."

Meanwhile, the odd-numbered
chapters are doing an acceptably
charity survey of the author's an-
cestors, notably Grandfather Burton,
who "was born in 1868, so perhaps
this book is in some way a tardy

monument to his century." Even
here the philosophical awkwardness
shows, for when Mr Sillitoe finds
himself referring to the "true side"
of the old blacksmith's nature, he
is obliged hurriedly to interject "if
there was such a thing", so as not to
offend against the principles of ver-
acity expounded in nearby pages.

At this stage in the book, nothing
goes right for Mr Sillitoe. Dull and
ill-formed statements display his un-
ease ("known in the trade as a care-
ful worker, his forge was always neat
and tidy"), and it is not until he gets
out of the shadow cast over his past
by Grandfather Burton that Mr
Sillitoe looks like rescuing himself.
Taking a broader view of the family
past, and concentrating on the Great
War generation, he succeeds in
establishing an uncomplicated sym-
pathy for the men of 1914 who went
out, and the bewildered youths who
returned. Sillitoe the military his-
torian gets an outing here, and
simple passion pulls him through:
but not without descents into fright-
ful journalism ("It was Slaughter
City") and schoolboy-essay bathos
("The retreat to Dunkirk in the
Second World War, and the subse-
quent evacuation, was a great mili-
tary feat").

Unfortunately, the sympathy gener-
ated by Mr Sillitoe's compassionate
view of the past, and his present suf-
ferings on its behalf, do not render
his final bursts of aphoristic specu-
lation any more acceptable. One long
to be able to break in upon his mon-
ologue and protest that if any writer
is likely to get nearer to the truth
by not talking about it, that writer is
Alan Sillitoe. His "raw material"
in that half-digested stage between
his unique experience and his
equally unique interpretation of it,
no better than the mixture of pre-
occupation and conviction that we
all have spinning in our brains.

General:

Gordon Rattray Taylor Rethink

An important new book by the author of *The Doomsday Book*
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ES PURDY:

Eliph Thrusch
Cape. £1.50.

Terentius could pull it off, and
Fellini could pull it off, and
James Purdy? The identi-
fication of imperial Rome and the
State is, after all, a common-
place of the Camp culture. So enter
Thrusch, mime, poet, painter—
a prophet of unrepentant corrup-
tion and eternal youth, part white,
part, mucous talent.

What this American *Satyricon*,
written with Kashmiri siff and
tinged with mascara, satire must
do for itself. For the fable itself
is an exotic, yellow
fairy world, or Etruscan
mythology of a million
millions of de Frayne, and the
comic, and antique lover (Pierrot,
the Most Beautiful Man
in the World), himself in love with
his great-grandson, the Bird of
Paradise, a young boy with flowing
locks, a blinding wild Indian
and a mouth of brilliant ver-

What seems to ring out from
the old, tortured cry of
the American black, gold,
perpetual heat and her whole
character is a more effective aspect
of the book is that everyone is nuts
from the President down. Add to this
the fact that Peter Smalley has a
fine, if largely unvaried, sense of the
ridiculous, and you have a novel
which sets out to be funny, and suc-
ceeds, while pointing out, almost in-
cidentally, that the war is an activity
which many people tend not to sur-
vive. The humour is not a means of
betraying the horrors of battle, it
actually incorporates them and lends
them its vocabulary, and the effect,
of course, is not to diminish the
atrocious but to accentuate it.
Having said that, it would be
reasonable to cite *Dr Strangelove* and
Catch 22 as models for *A Warm Gun*
and, indeed, it would not be entirely
unfair, but the specific pleasures of
Mr Smalley's novel are cleverly con-
cocted, brilliantly expressed, and in-
debted to no one. A feeling of hyster-
ical, raving desperation underlies

suck in some permanent, cosmetic
youth.
So perhaps, after all, this *Thrusch*
is not only a *Satyricon*, but an American
parable. Set in a fairy-tale city
of New York, this dark exotic jewel,
as if fathered by Cocteau on F. Scott
Fitzgerald, seems like the pianist
with dark circles in his moon-pale
face and a geranium in his button-
hole, flashing looks of malevolent
hatred at the audience "when he was
not playing Cécile Chaminade or
Eric Coates".

the whole narrative, a frenzy which
comes close to being slapstick, so that
violence becomes part of the joke
without seeming gratuitously or
pointedly sick; and that mad logic is
transmitted, most importantly, to the
language of the novel.

The obvious example of this is the
way in which the Pentagon boys
use cute euphemisms like "nuke"
to describe nuclear bombardment,
but it extends more effectively to
conversational missed connections:
that very funny and quite uncontrol-
lable verbal process which leaves one
character abused by another's near-
insane confusion.

Pic Joseph P—the one sane
person in the book, is wiped out
pretty early in the proceedings.
General Howard B. Markham, who
is one of the nuttiest, survives long
enough to be driven even further
around the twist by Joseph's dispropor-
tionate and posthumous influence
over the lives of those involved with
him. The narrative, which encom-
passes both these deaths and many
others, and the hilarious insanities
which attend them, is as deliberate
and justified in its use of humour as
in its avoidance of moral judgment:
a strategy which leaves the reader
delighted by the belly laughs, while
literally suffering from their effect.

BETWEEN 1834 and 1885 Britain had sixteen governments. In 1882 W. S. Gilbert expressed the platitude that Nature always does contrive That every boy and every girl, That's born into this world alive, Is either a little Liberal, Or else a little Conservative.

During four-fifths of this period one of six men had been Prime Minister. Lord Melbourne had been a Whig Member of Parliament for more than twenty years before taking office in a Tory government, and then three years later became a Whig minister. Lord Derby, an under-secretary under a Tory Prime Minister, became a member of a Whig cabinet and soon returned to the Tories. Lord Palmerston, after serving in three Tory governments, became a leading Whig. Disraeli had stood for Parliament as a Radical without success and became five years later a Conservative member. Gladstone, the rising hope of those stern and unbending Tories, became the greatest of Liberal Prime Ministers. One begins to feel that it made very little difference into which party in those days a boy or girl was born. And then one thinks of Sir Robert Peel, who never deviated from his position as a Tory or Conservative. Yet he was the man whom Disraeli said that he caught the Whigs bathing and walked away with their clothes, and Lord Rosebery, a less prejudiced critic, said: "So the year 1846 [he was referring to the repeal of the Corn Laws] was destined to be fatal to high principle in politics."

Peel, in fact, is much the most complex character among the British statesmen of the nineteenth century and the most difficult to place. Perhaps it is not surprising that we have had to wait so long for a biography worthy of him. Norman Gash's first volume, *Mr Secretary Peel*, came out eleven years ago. The second volume, the life of Peel after 1839, has just been published. It is fascinating for its style, for the control over the material, for the insight it gives into the practical working of politics at the time, in the Cabinet, in Parliament and at the informal party meetings. Above all, it makes of Peel, however much he covered up his own springs of feelings, an understandable person.

The book begins with Peel opposing the Reform Bill of 1832. It was the least satisfactory period of his career. Perhaps here Professor Gash is a little too kind to him. In fact, the rest of Peel's life was taken up with showing that the changes in the House of Commons in 1832 were necessary and justified. Where would Peel have been in 1846 if the Commons had not been reformed? Would the Corn Laws have been repealed if the reform had been of the limited nature he advocated? (And Peel never made it at all clear what that was.) In 1830-32 Peel did what Rosebery said he ought to have done in 1846: he told the Opposition that it was their duty to carry out their own policy and that he was not prepared to take office to do it for them. The fact is that Peel at that time was still haunted by the spectre of the passing of Catholic Emancipation in 1829, when it was held that he had betrayed his party. Professor Gash sums it up: "Great Britain's victory of reform, the only way of limiting its dangerous effects was to ensure that its passage to the statute book was made as painful as possible. Instead of being an inspiration, it should be a warning to future reformers." It was what Peel said himself, but it is not very convincing.

In the end, the real test for Peel

A Conservative in Whig clothing

NORMAN GASH:

Sir Robert Peel
The Life of Sir Robert Peel after 1839
743pp. Longman. £8.

came in 1848. Leaving on one side the problems raised by nationalism, the main cause of the utter failure of the Revolution of 1848 throughout Europe was the fact that two revolutions were telescoped, one by the middle, the other by the working class. (It was not the only cause of the failure, of course. There was, for instance, the complete lack of political experience in Germany.) Many at the time would have said that what saved England was the character of her people. In a magnificent passage in April 1848, *The Economist* expressed its gratitude "that we belong to a race, which, if it cannot boast the flowing fancy of one of its neighbours [it was referring to the Czechs], nor the brilliant spirit of the other [the Gauls], has an ample compensation in the solid, slow, reflective, phlegmatic temperament which has saved us from so many errors, spared us so many experiments, and purchased for us so many real, though incomplete and unsystematic blessings."

This was not what people had felt in 1842, when the disturbances in England were much more serious than elsewhere in Europe. It was Peel who prevented a revolution in this country. He recognized very quickly the power which the Reform Bill had given to the middle classes. In 1835 he said: "We deny that we like the Conservative Party to be separated by any line of interest, or any other line of demarcation from the middle classes." But during the next seven years he moved a long way. Peel's ideal for the "middle classes" was something very different from that expressed by Engels in the final chapter of his *Condition of the Working Class in England* in 1844: "It is utterly indifferent to the English bourgeois whether his working men starve or not, if only he makes money." In 1842, Graham,

his right-hand man, instructed the Military Commander of the North and Midlands Districts that, while defending property against looters and men at work against intimidation by strikers, he should do everything he could to remove the suspicion that the government and the military were prepared to use force to make the workmen resume employment at what they considered inadequate wages. The general, in fact, was to urge employers to meet the just grievances of the workers. Peel wrote at once to endorse Graham's action. The contrast with the part played by the armies of Europe who brought to an end the Revolution of 1848 is complete.

Peel was a most practical and efficient statesman, but what made him act as he did over the disturbances of 1842 and 1843 and later over the Corn Laws was not so much experience and competence as sensitiveness and compassion. Perhaps the most significant words he ever uttered were these: "I shall never forget as long as I live the situation in Paisley in 1841 and 1842." Or we may remember his view in one of the great debates on repeal: "I have a strong belief that the greatest object which we or any other government can attempt should be to elevate the social condition of that class of people with whom we are brought into no direct relationship by the exercise of the elective franchise."

Peel himself was not unaware of the significance of 1848. "It was that confidence in the generosity and justice of Parliament which in no way enabled you to pass triumphantly through the storm which convulsed other nations in 1848." These words came in one of his last speeches in the Commons. But the moment when this most rational man gave himself away completely was before the Revolution of 1847, when the French *Chambre d'Affaires*, the Comité de salut public, directed so him at his London house. It is surely one of the most astonishing conversations in English history, and it is a pity

perhaps, that Professor Gash did not quote in full the account of the interview which was written by the Countess of Shaftesbury in 1890.

At length he looked at me and began to speak. Such was his manner that he was referring to the works of Louis Blanc, and he was judged by the effect of his words that they may produce upon his hearers. He was speaking of the state of the classes whose education and enlightenment can preserve them in comfort. But our civilization had the result of doing away with the existence of human beings, to an existence of pain and labour, to profound suffering and to suffering as difficult as that of the animals. What ferments will not be produced in these cramped conditions, in these narrow hearts, by such passionate desires, and to their remedy. Then it was for the first time that I understood, indeed, that the statesman before me was not only a statesman, but a man who had the Corn Laws for his life's work. I learned the true character of Sir Robert Peel.

Who would have guessed that this passage that Peel had written in 1822 for the *Review of the Revolution of 1848*?

But we cannot ignore the fact that Peel had made his name as Secretary for Ireland from 1819 to 1822. He had, perhaps, been more appreciative of the nature of the Irish problem than most English statesmen of the time, though he had supported strongly the Protestant ascendancy in the role of the state until his volte face in 1821. It is astonishing how incapable of standing the issues in nearly all English statesmen were until 1800. Nothing is more expected in Peel's career than the gradual development of his understanding of the role of the Irish troubles. But his policy of Maynooth, while it showed courage, was only a beginning.

Peel was the pioneer of the "Communes" of Senegal, and also in the reasons they found it necessary to defend their rights to remain French, that they had paid their "blood tax". Yet the strange and offensive anomalies between the conditions of service of Senegalese soldiers born in the Four Communes and those even from the same families in the protectorate could not be eradicated by Diagne, and significant differences between African "citizens" and African "subjects" persisted until after the Second World War.

But his analysis centres on the skillful exploitation of the special Black franchise by leaders of the calibre of Galandou Diaw, a Wolof from Saint Louis, after 1909, and by the more famous Diagne who was elected to the French Assembly in 1914, triumphing over bitter and resolute opposition from the influential Creoles and the locally based French, who regarded representation in the metropolis as their own preserve. Diagne went on to become a respected and influential Minister and, especially after his death in the early 1930s, his name, together with that of Félix Eboué a decade later, was constantly evoked by French apologists who sought to emphasize the non-racial character of their empire. However, Mr Johnson allows no doubt as to the sustained, determined struggle which was required from Diagne and his supporters in order to win from France a reasonably enlightened interpretation of the laws governing the rights of Africans to citizenship and franchise. In particular, they had to exploit France's need for manpower in the face of the death-toll on the Western Front and after the First World War. Diagne and the African leaders occasionally found it necessary to defend their rights to remain French, that they had paid their "blood tax". Yet the strange and offensive anomalies between the conditions of service of Senegalese soldiers born in the Four Communes and those even from the same families in the protectorate could not be eradicated by Diagne, and significant differences between African "citizens" and African "subjects" persisted until after the Second World War.

These dilemmas and disputes over the institutions and rival colonial theories of assimilation and association were, of course, not peculiar to the French Empire. On a local level they were argued in the Cape Colony and Natal in the nineteenth century and in Rhodesia and Kenya in the twentieth. Smuts in 1917 offered his associationist concept of Commonwealth in opposition to Lionel Curtis's more centripetal or assimilationist view and the British debate continued until after 1947, with Gandhi, Nehru and others making their contributions. After decolonization and independence much of the international conflict over constitutional forms and other

political institutions has terminated. But the cultural, educational, economic, and military dilemmas remain unresolved. It is here, perhaps, that Senegal most deserves to be admired: he realized very early on that the deeper cultural issues deserved priority over the more narrowly "political" ones.

G. WESLEY JOHNSON, Jr:

The Emergence of Black Politics in Senegal

The Struggle for Power in the Four Communes, 1900-1920.

260pp. Stanford University Press for the Hoover Institution. London: Oxford University Press. £4.25.

JACQUES LOUIS HYMANS:

Léopold Sédar Senghor

An Intellectual Biography.

312pp. Edinburgh University Press. £3.50.

RITA CRUISE O'BRIEN:

White Society in Black Africa: The French of Senegal

320pp. Faber and Faber. £3.50.

Together the young scholars drew deeply on the thought of a wide range of European philosophers and poets, mostly French, and Mr Hymans has done a thorough and conscientious piece of work in listing and assessing these various intellectual influences. Clear evidence of the author's regard for accuracy is the fact that he submitted his text to President Senghor before publication and that he did not hesitate to publish as an appendix Senghor's letter of comment containing pungent criticism and dissent as well as commendation. But Mr Hymans, whom President Senghor affectionately dubbed his "white shadow" during his research, makes plain that it was in Paris that Senghor came to see himself as an African and to understand the meaning of *négritude*. He rebelled against his formal assimilationist education, so pro-

foundly expressive of French cultural chauvinism and identified himself emotionally with the Black Americans and West Indians, as well as with the Africans, who were then attacking White racism in all its forms. In due course Senghor's *Black Orpheus*, published in an anthology of Senghor's in 1948, assured Senghor of both the wider world audience and the recognition which his unique quality deserved. Since then the mature Senghor has developed his concepts of *négritude*, African socialism and the "civilization of the universal", a holistic philosophy—possibly more profound than that of Smuts—founded on the complete equivalence of richly different cultural traditions.

Ever ready to welcome the contributions of other powerful minds Senghor was one of the first to absorb and employ the thought of Teilhard de Chardin, whose universalist Christian philosophy appealed to him more strongly than the dialectical materialism of Marx, for whom, nevertheless, Senghor has long held a genuine admiration. Of all Senghor's convictions and exhortations, assimilation, don't be assimilated, is the most significant, urging Africans and Blacks to take the initiative, to be active not passive. It is perhaps in keeping with his conviction that this remarkable poet-President, who for so long has fought for European unity and cooperation between French and English-speaking Africa, has recently set himself the task of translating into French the poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins.

However, Dr Cruise O'Brien's book leaves no room for complacency regarding the unbalanced social structure of Senegal. There is still too great an economic and military dependence upon France, the senior civil servants and teachers are still mostly French, and the President, himself so distinguished a figure in the elitist French university world, has no wish to see the abandonment of connections and of certain standards or methods which he most profoundly believes to be the advantage of Africa and Africans. French expatriate attitudes are all too depressingly familiar. But with an economy which remains precariously based on groundnuts, and a too-heavy Civil Service (the relic of the former extensive Federation of French West Africa), the material reasons for the continuing close ties with France are plain enough. There is also a delicate equilibrium between the Muslim majority and the Christian minority. Dr Cruise O'Brien's competent study, providing a necessary and sometimes startling perspective and prompts speculation about the immediate as well as the long-term future.

The War Hitler Won

Nicholas Bethell

£4.00

So, to catch Roosevelt out on his

So, to catch Roosevelt out on his

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This is a closely and vividly written account of the vital weeks after Hitler's troops invaded Poland on 1 September 1939, when for a time it seemed that, treaty or no, the West would do nothing to help the Poles. Nicholas Bethell's research follows the opening of the State Papers for the period. The behind-the-scenes manoeuvres in Moscow and Berlin are fully described, the political purposes behind Roosevelt's public statements, the bargaining between Paris and London, and the heroic, terrible story of the Poles themselves.

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Monarch in the White House

FINIS FARR:
FDR
439pp. New York: Arlington House.
\$9.95.

One of the aspects of American life that used to irritate or, at any rate, startle British visitors was the savage bad manners and political stupidity of the American rich and their political hirelings. Many of the tracts and editorials published by the official journals of the "good, the wise and the rich" had the beginning that Finis Farr's book is not one of these base and stupid productions. It is sometimes uncritically hostile to Roosevelt, but it is neither malignant nor mendacious. More than that, some of its criticisms of FDR are justified and are not merely specimens of that reflexive denigration that almost automatically follows when (to use André Malraux's metaphor) one of the great oaks of modern history is cut down. Roosevelt may not have been a great man, but he was a very important man in modern history and Mr Farr does not, indeed could not, conceal the fact.

Mr Farr has a theory to expound concerning the perils of exalting the presidential office, a tendency which, for him, apparently begins

with Lincoln. "Apparently," for it is not clear just what Lincoln's crime was. "Was it that he 'saved the Union' or freed the slaves or made the best presidential speeches or his usurped power from the rightful owners, the Senators (for it is hard to think of any plausible claims for the rights of the House of Representatives)? Unfortunately, Mr Farr does not expound any plausible doctrine of senatorial power or even of the power of such eminent congressional leaders as Speaker Reed. Nor does he really offer any remedy for White House usurpation. Indeed, it is a pity that Mr Farr has pulled his punches and devoted too little time or thought to justifying his thesis: for a well-informed criticism of Roosevelt as President or, indeed, of Woodrow Wilson or, today, of Woodrow Wilson's deep admirer, President Nixon, might be very useful for the American body politic.

Instead of that we get a general attack on the myth of the nearly omnipotent—and omniscient—President which might even mute the critics of White House aggression. This would be a pity, for the monarchical aspects of the presidential office deserve critical examination if only because of the abuses with the White House which so limited the public usefulness of such admirable senators in person as Adlai Stevenson. Presidents need some equivalent of the orchestra that the

King of Kings in Zog's wedding video for the concealed son of F. D. Roosevelt was no more than Napoleon I. He occasionally played Bismarck's trick of deceiving his enemies by telling the truth, but that was largely a matter of choice of weapons. He had one suspects, even glimpse of the volutions that President-elect Wilson and John Foster Dulles had in mind. So, to catch Roosevelt out on his

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M. R. HODGKIN (Editor):

Young Winter's Tales, 3

Macmillan, £1.95, (333 14294 2)

WILLIAM PENE DU BOIS:

The Twenty-One Balloons

World's Work, £1.60, (437 34820 2)

Young Winter's Tales confirms itself this year as an attractive collection of stories and poems for readers over ten or eleven. The picking out of favourites is mainly a matter of personal taste rather than of great variation in quality, though there are two or three items which don't quite earn their space. The most memorable story in the book is by Fay Goldie. She writes of an incident in her own childhood, when a small black boy, who only wanted to play with her, was sentenced to six strokes and three months' hard labour. The story is an act of exorcism, told in the third person. "It is," she writes in a note at the back, "a typical South African story." It is a chilling thought.

The strength of the volume does seem to be in its realistic stories. There are three others worth mentioning, by Jill Chaney, Linda Jennings, and best of all, Dick Cato's "Going to the Dogs". But there is also a marvellously funny, ridiculously convincing yarn by William Wyman Butler called "The Bugbug."

Of the poems, particularly attractive are "At the Florists" by Kevin Crossley-Holland, John Fuller's song in praise of a huge horse, a plain unpretentious poem by a new poet, Tony Charles, called "Skeletons of Alice" and a striking celebration of "Grandad Harry, the Grunter" by Ted Walker. Prudence Andrew's showy verse-drama "Pandora's Box" has its

weak moments but is worth having for its audacious anachronisms and sheer energy. Altogether, *Young Winter's Tales* provides a home for and makes accessible the sort of material rarely found elsewhere.

After twenty-two years the *crucible* of Newbery Medal winners, *The Twenty-One Balloons*, is back in print. It should do better on the second round, for the present generation of readers is rather more finely attuned to eccentricity. Part of Mr Pene du Bois's eccentricity lies in his sense of style. This is a most elegant book, its prose as mannered and precise as its author's own illustrations; few books have achieved so perfect a union of word and picture.

It is the story of Professor Sherm

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who took up ballooning in 1883.

He left San Francisco

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of convincing detail how one

became twenty-one and how

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place at the time of the great

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Spoken down the ages

NOT SINCE the golden age of the folklorist in the latter half of the last century has there been such a renewal of interest in folk literature from all parts of the world. In the anxiety to meet or foster this need there seems to be some ambivalence in the minds of authors and publishers alike. To whom are their books addressed? Style and content are often at variance with packaging and presentation: charming pictures do not mediate inadequate stories or a difficult text. Scholarly authenticity in the reporting of a story collected in the field is not at all the same thing as a gift for story-telling. The assumption that all folk literature, whatever its form and content, is the natural preserve of children is as mistaken as to imply that everything in the more specialist presentations is beyond their grasp. But in offering them folk tales of any kind there is one overriding criterion—is it a good story?

TALES TOLD TO KABBARI is a selection from the many stories collected by a remarkable woman, Daisy Bates, from the Australian Aborigines during her long association with them between 1899 and 1945. To the white grandmother—the Kabbari of the title—were revealed stories hitherto the sole preserve of the initiated male members of the tribes. There are stories of creation, a great flood, the coming of fire, and of morality; of magic, ritual,

and tribal custom. Spirit snakes, birds, and above all kangaroos, roam the land. The amazing anthropomorphism of man and beast is at times bewildering in its frequency and rapidity.

Barbara Ker Wilson's telling preserves the simple as well as the

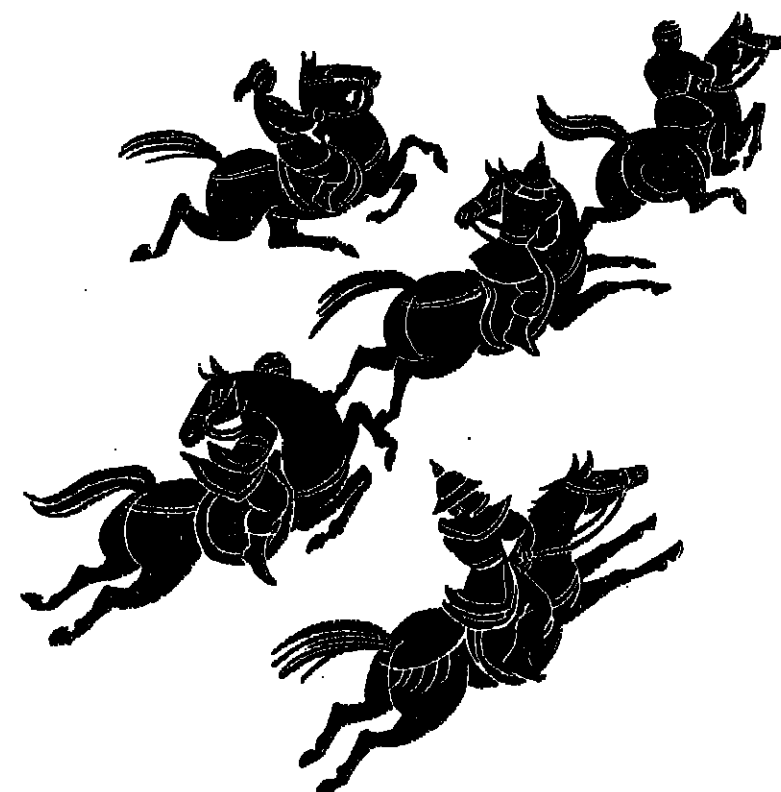
sublime. There are many things to delight and entertain a child, but this is a "heavy" book. The careful documentation and annotation, as well as the weighty introduction, imply the more serious student of folklore.

There is no ambivalence of intention in *The City of the Dagger*, a collection of Burmese tales. Again the stories have been gathered orally, this time at first hand by one of the authors, H. H. Kooly, but they have been retold in a literary form specifically for children. All are here for their intrinsic merits as good stories. Information about life and landscape emerges naturally in the course of the narrative. There is considerable variety of mood. Blind princes set out in search of their fate, a young man defeats a fearsome dragon; magical tigers, relentless warriors, and vast armies charge across the pages. Elsewhere gentle lovers meet a moving end, Buddhist monks bring light to Burma. There is a brief but adequate note on the historical background, and a simple map. This is a most satisfying book, beautifully designed and illustrated by Christine Price.

It is axiomatic that a folktale cannot be both the collective voice of a people and the "entirely original creation" of an individual writer. Yet these are the rival claims made by author and publisher of *Legends and Folktales of Lapland* by Valerie Stauder. We are given the assurance of a "rigidly authentic background". On this is superimposed an original story created from various elements in Lapland folklore. The stories themselves are so traditional in feel as to be "original" only in the narrowest sense. The picture of life and landscape is well drawn, but the title as it stands is false and misleading.

Weland: Smith of the Gods retells one of the most important of the Norse cycle of myths and legends. It is a story of great beauty and terrible savagery to which Ursula Syngde does full justice. Her powerful and poetic recreation of the story is one of the finest among recent retellings of tales. The sparse, harsh drawings by Charles Keating precisely match the central character of the story.

The Story of Persephone is retold in words and pictures by Penelope Farmer and Graham McCallum. It is the third in the Collins "Myth and Legend" series, and much the most successful to date. The tortuous struggle of words in the earlier volumes is here replaced by



From *The City of the Dagger*

DAISY BATES and BARBARA KER WILSON: *Tales told to Kabbari*. Illustrated by Harold Thomas. Angus and Robertson. £1.50. (207 12300 4)

CHARLES KEATING: *Arctic Folk Tales and Fables*. Illustrated by William Phipps. Oxford University Press. £2. (19 27411 9)

H. H. KOOLY and CHRISTINE PRICE: *The City of the Dagger*. Illustrated by Christine Price. Warner. £1.60. (7232 1473 5)

VALERIE STAUDER: *Legends and Folktales of Lapland*. Illustrated by Arthur Björnsdottir. Mowbrays. £2.00. (264 64582 0)

URSULA SYNGDE: *Weland: Smith of the Gods*. Illustrated by Charles Keating. Badley Head. £1.05. (370 01268 2)

PENELOPE FARMER: *The Story of Persephone*. Illustrated by Graham McCallum. Collins. £1.50. (00 102303)

RUTH MANNING-SANDERS (Compiler): *Folktales*. Illustrated by Raymond Briggs. Heinemann. £1.95. (434 55023 8)

arbitrary nature of the stories, vividly conveying the sense that this is the authentic voice of prehistoric man speaking now. The outstanding illustrations by an Aborigine artist, Harold Thomas, are at times really distinguished in their vision of an archaic but living way of life. This is a handsome and exciting book but not one whose main interest is literary. The stories are compelling not for their narrative force or intricacy of plot, but for their revelation of a way of life. Their chief interest is anthropological, a literary counterpart to Lascaux. As the author herself says, "these are far more than stories told for pure enjoyment". More emphatically, they are scarcely stories in this

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Beyond reality



From *The Beachcombers*

MISS CRESSWELL: *The Beachcombers*. Illustrated by Errol Le Cain. Faber and Faber. £1.30. (571 09932 1)

RUSSELL HOBAN: *The Sea-thing Child*. Illustrated by Tom Hoban. Faber. £1. (575 01438 5)

When he mounted the ridge of dunes and looked down into the blindingly wet and gleaming bay he saw the Dalkers in a little group, beards and hair streaming, their bodies shivering through their wind-torn rags, being played

at. He was most divinely discontented of men. He was, for the young, when Cresswell, continues her exploration of the frontiers of reality to the *Beachcombers*. This has the warm humour of *The Night-watchmen*. Like all the other stories it marks a fresh viewpoint and a different goal. It may not win devotees; it should not have them.

His mother, poor and overworked, sees in a newspaper advertisement a solution to her problem: how to give Ned a holiday. Kindly couple offer free holiday to a seaside home to boy aged 9. He is company for only child. Own name, Good food. How was she to first appearance. Pony, the little girl who will one day be Master of

and his tribe or that the good food would be blunter paste and bakewell tarts? As for the "own room", that has been let to a paying lodger, and Ned has to share with the pale and rat-like Jack. The Pickeringings are among Miss Cresswell's most brilliant creations—Errol Le Cain captures the spiritual rat in them in his brilliantly disturbing illustrations—for they are both grotesque and real, especially "auntie" who sees in every scavenging enterprise the promise of good times. "She really counted... see Jack and himself running and shouting together on the beach, bonn companions, while she herself perhaps sat nearby, wearing the green crocheted jumper, smiling and ladylike." Alas for her dreams. Ned gives Jack "not entirely a black eye—more a green, yellow and purple eye".

Ned escapes from the Pickeringings and their "scratched-together" house to the beach and the Beachcombers. The Dalkers are cousins of the Pickeringings, but they confine their scavenging to the clean and lovely gifts of the sea. They live on the Sea Queen, a three-master which survives miraculously on the East Coast sands. Here they await their return of the ship's log, lost for 75 years but soon to come floating back in its brass-bound box together with the treasure which will enable them to retell the Queen and sail away to more Dalker adventures—that is, if the Pickeringings don't scavenge it first.

Ned finds himself in the position of double-agent, spying on the Dalkers for the repulsive Pickeringings, keeping the Dalkers up to date with Pickering plans. No wonder—he is only a little boy—he sometimes sees the Beachcombers as "The Enemy". He knew which side he was on, and yet to be in the very camp of the enemy, and hear their point of view, oddly blurred the issue. As always, Miss Cresswell gives depth to her fantasy by her subtle exploration of the characters of her protagonists.

Is it fantasy? There are none of the conventional trappings of fantasy, no magic, no bending of natural laws. But slowly, as the plot works its intricate way out, the flesh seems to fall from the bones of the *Beachcombers* and they become as ghostly as their old ship and as timeless as the wind which blows through them. If one looks for them there are clues to this throughout the story. Even at her first appearance Pony, the little girl who will one day be Master of

the Sea Queen, is faceless—and, so drawn by Mr Le Cain—and, as she drifts behind her across the sand, the marks "wiped out the girl's own footprints, making her seem oddly anonymous and out of reach".

The framework of her stories is Miss Cresswell's most characteristic device. Ned's story is written, albeit in the third person, by himself and rolled into a bottle which is bunched on the Norfolk coast. The author breaks the bottle and sees, in a vividly authentic phrase, "the papers... uncurling slowly as if stretching after a long cramp". But the last pages have been destroyed by exposure and the story is unfinished. Did Ned sail away with his Beachcombers, abandoning not only the odious Pickeringings but also his mother? Neither the reader nor the author knows.

Not for the first time Miss Cresswell's imaginings are more real than reality. Russell Hoban is another writer who explores remote frontiers. After the block-busting *Mouse and His Child* anything might seem possible from him, even such a frail, elusive fantasy as *The Sea-thing Child*. This has presumably some allegorical significance, but the key does not come readily to the reader's hand.

The sea-thing child comes ashore in a storm. He has perhaps something of the fish, something of the bird, in his nature, but after the terrors of the waves he is content to deny his self and stay on land, passing the days in playing with stones and teasing a fiddler crab. Contacts with an eel and an albatross extend his horizon a little, and then, when it seems that he will stay on the beach for ever, the music of sky and sea tempt him to try his wings and he flies into the storm.

It matters less that this should have some overt or esoteric significance than that the writing should be moving and evocative. In fact it is only occasionally either. Mr Hoban moves uneasily between commonplace and "fine" writing, and even "the long, long, magic curve of silence arching underneath the day's long sky" pulls a little at the third repetition. *The Sea-thing Child* is not quite a poem; it is insufficiently developed to make a novel, too long to be a short story. Classification does not matter if a work is strong enough to transcend form, but the indeterminate form of this curious piece is symptomatic of a fundamental uncertainty.

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The fugitive have moved to their new country home and Tim, the teenage son, is suffering from a sense of discontent and aimlessness. His mood is broken by the discovery of some old drawings which bear his own initials; he then finds out that the artist died when he was about the same age as he himself is now. Tim feels an inexplicable affinity with this boy, and in uncovering the story of his life and death finds the key to his own future. Written and illustrated by K. M. Peyton. £1.15 net.

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The hero of this fantasy/adventure is Richard, who, during a holiday in a remote part of Scotland, finds himself empowered to enter the kingdom of the Nemmies. He has been chosen by the great Annah to lead a dangerous mission involving the evil Mongs who live in the mountain of Cremlun. Written by Ian Kellum and illustrated by Robin Jacques. £1.80 net.

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A TIME IN A CITY

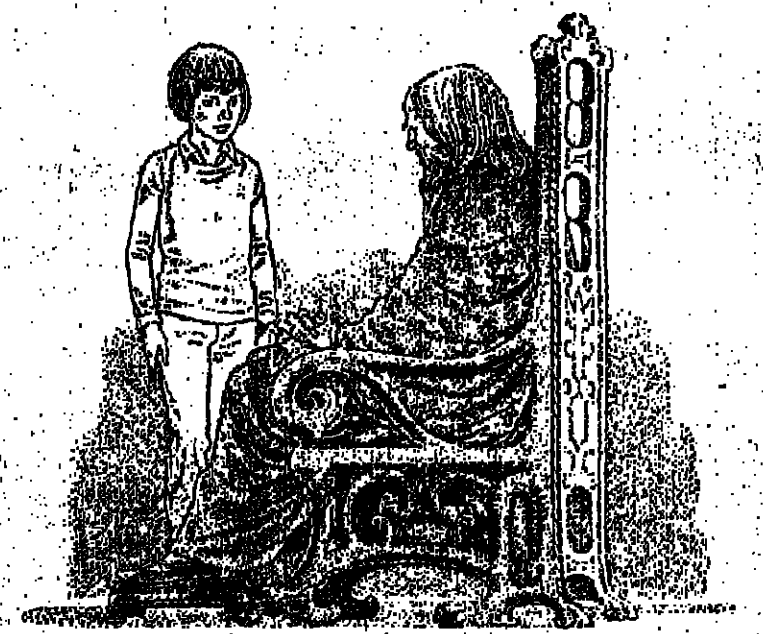
This is the second book about Kate Bassett, a young servant living at the time of the first world war, who, because of a rule then in existence which penalised clever children, had to leave school at the age of twelve. Her fellow servants are kind, but young people of today will be astonished at how much of one's life was expected for five shillings a week. Written by Corinna Cooper and illustrated by Robin Jacques. £1.50 net.

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editor, Mary McGarry, has gathered the words of the original authors and story-tellers to tell their own tale. Not all are equally successful, but the best, notably those of the Jacobites, prove that it is not necessary to exchange new for old. The pleasantly stylized black-and-white drawings are by Richard Hook.

The stories of ghosts and other supernatural phenomena in *Twelve Black Cats* are evidence of a continuing oral tradition in at least one branch of folk literature in the Celtic lands. All were collected by the late Mr. Leonard from the people and are told in a simple, direct style. Some have their origin in the troubled times of the Jacobites, but most are comparatively recent, and apart from any inclusion of the word "cat", they are not entered

simply as stories worth the telling. And good ones they are too, particularly for reading aloud. There is as much sly humour as grim warning, and the ghosts haunt the pages with all the idiosyncrasy and character of their more substantial counterparts.



The Haunted Mountain does not simply retell an old story, but reworks within the framework of a novel the story of Tam Lane, the man stolen by the fairies and released after seven years' bondage by the enduring power of human love. In constructing her framework Mollie Hunter uses many other familiar incidents and motifs from the fairy world. Set against this world of shadows and illusions is the real world of a Scottish Highland farming community any time in the last century. MacAllister is the intensely human champion of this world. Stubborn and rash he may be, but in the end he is triumphant. The power of the old magic is broken, and a whole community released from superstitious dread. The deft handling of plot, and the speed and fluency of the narrative, make this an easy read, but in its own fairly slight way it says some important things. About courage and suffering and something too about the dignity and responsibility of being only human?

MARY MCGARRY: *Great Folk Tales of Old Ireland*. Illustrated by Richard Hook. White. £1.50. (7234 0491 7)

SORCERER NIC LEONARD: *Twelve Black Cats*. Illustrated by Michael Jackson. Bodley Head. £1.30. (370 01270 4)

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The end of childhood



From *Hughie*

IT'S AN EXCITING thing when a writer one has always enjoyed produces a book which one feels is the best yet. In *A Pattern of Roses*, K. M. Peyton has combined the elements of many of her previous books into a completely satisfying whole. She showed in the Pennington books an easy familiarity with the contemporary young. She showed in the Flambards trilogy a marvellous ability to evoke the past—past which is within the memory of the very old. In the new book, the past and present are mysteriously linked when Tim is convalescing with 0 levels behind him. In the house his parents have recently bought. He finds a tin of drawings signed with his own initials and the date: 17 February, 1910. Tim sees the Edwardian boy—a young farm labourer—and the broken earthy nails of his hand as he draws.

"I don't believe in ghosts," Rebecca, the Vicar's intimidating daughter, says to Tim. "I'm only telling you what happened." Tim replies. And this is how it feels. Mrs Peyton could have handled her story without fantasy. For the most part, the reader is firmly in one or other time. But the inexplicable element adds enormously to the emotional weight of the book and gives intense conviction to Rebecca's desperate concern for Tim's life at the climax of the book. It would be unfair to tell the plot. Technically, *A Pattern of Roses* is a considerable achievement. Moving back and forth between what actually happened and the attempts to find out what happened, the reader is totally involved. The central concern of the book is the basic one of adolescence: "What sort of adult do I want to become?" It should be of absorbing interest to fifteen and sixteen-year-olds if they can be persuaded to try it—but it should appeal equally to the younger children who are more likely to read it.

Mrs Peyton has been said to have a "sound but romantic heart". It is interesting to compare this new book with John Rowe Townsend's *Goodnight, Prof, Love* (1970). Like Tim, Graham is rebelling at the prospect of a lifetime following in his father's footsteps. Mr Townsend gave the realistic ending; Graham returned to the fold. Mrs Peyton manages to persuade us that the romantic ending is equally plausible. Tim, with the help of Tom and of Rebecca, does have "the guts to be free", and he has something positive to put in the place of the future carefully planned for him by his materialistic parents. Mrs Peyton and Mr Townsend are two of the most gifted of the writers who came to prominence in the 1960s. Mrs Peyton has always been the more natural writer. "I write," as she herself puts it, "exactly what I want to write."

Mr Townsend seems more self-conscious and deliberate. He once said that *Goodnight, Prof, Love* was written because of his "particular interest in books for adolescents". He is a stylist and an experimenter. *The Summer People* is written in the present tense, mostly in short sentences which make an immediate impact. It is the story of a man who was nearly seventeen at the time. A boy and girl, meeting accidentally in a condemned house on the edge of a cliff, rehearse their roles in life. The symbolism is carefully constructed. The book ends with the house where Ann and Philip have accepted their

play, cracking open and sliding over the edge just as war is declared and the summer of childhood is over for ever.

In keeping his realist's hat firmly on his head, the author makes Ann such a dreary girl ("wet" would be another word for her) that we do not care enough what happens. We are told how much that summer meant to Philip but we never feel it. In form the book is like *The Go-Between* but, like *Leo* in that book, the young have "sensationalising minds" and nothing sensational happens in the Yorkshire resort of Lincolny Bottom. Mr Townsend's own honesty to the situation he has chosen has made him write a sad, dull book.

The world of Honor Arundel's *A Family Failing* is a more sophisticated one. The Douglas parents are both journalists. The family seems prosperous and happy. Her father tells Joanna to write about happiness before people forget what it is. But nothing is certain; the father loses his job and the family begins to fall apart. Miss Arundel chronicles the decay with subtlety and understanding. For once in a children's book, if it can be called a children's book, the parents are major characters, entirely in the round. It is a family story in a rare sense, a book about the way we wound each other and need each other, and about the fact that there is no real escape from wounding and needing. The commune, to which Joanna and her brother flee, is as full of demands and difficulties as any family. Highly circumstantial, the book is still in the quotidian of one section of contemporary society. Readers, whether recognizing a familiar world or exploring an alien one, will find much to stimulate their minds.

Hughie, by an Hungarian Australian called David Martin, is a vivid,

K. M. PEYTON: *A Pattern of Roses*. Oxford University Press. £1.15. (19 271347 7)

JOHN ROWE TOWNSEND: *The Summer People*. Illustrated by Robert Micklewright. Oxford University Press. £1.50. (19 271346 9)

HONOR ARUNDEL: *A Family Failing*. Hamish Hamilton. £1.25. (241 02198 7)

DAVID MARTIN: *Hughie*. Illustrated

And also...

MARGR. ESTHER ALLAN: *Time to go Back*. Abelard-Schuman. £1.30. (200 71876 2)

A girl of sixteen becomes interested in some poems written during the war by her dead aunt. She finds herself going back into the past and meeting not only the aunt but also her own mother, younger than she is, and experiencing the Liverpool blitz. The possibilities are not fully explored or deeply imagined but it

First aid

Junior Pears Encyclopaedia

Edited by Edward Bligh. Illustrated.

Pelham Books. £1. (7207 0696 7)

Junior Pears Encyclopaedia is a compendium of knowledge and, according to the preface, shows boys, schoolgirls and college students, but likely to be of most interest to boys in the 9-13 age group. The information is arranged in nearly twenty subject sections: World history, Railways, Sport, Natural contents page. Obviously the lack of an index is a handicap for a reader wanting a specific piece of information. Then, leaf through the appropriate subject section to locate it (or discover that it isn't provided).

Sooner or later, the reader will find the running order of the kings of England, albeit set out in a very confusing manner, the population of the Maldives Islands, the previous people of Botswana, the number of people in the world who speak Telegu, the meaning of *advice* and the weight of a cricket ball. It

is a readable, romantic story and more ambitious than many of Allan's books.

MICHAEL HARGREAVES: *Goals in the Air*. (Pyramid Books) Bantam. £1.10. (434 95794 1)

A football story, strictly for football fans. The emphasis is very much on realism rather than romance. Poor Kenny has unwelcome parents ("It's time you took a job") and a fathead girl friend to contend with, and ends up with broken ribs.

Lighter, easier stuff is to be found in Pamela Brown's *Summer of a Festival*. It's thirty years ago that the *Swish of the Curtain* was played in still the thing. This time the setting is in a Somerset progressive school which is being the ground on the night of a performance. "It was all a vision. One touch of reality and it crumbled." Unreal it may be, but it does give some idea of what it means to produce a play.

There is little feeling of what means to be a ballet dancer, indeed to live in Yugoslavia. *Ballet on Tour*. It is all ballet, his trips and churches. It is a real story, the language is flat, dull, the dialogue unnatural, the young people hardly distinguishable. Much the same could be made of Josephine Poole's very different book, *Where to Go from Here?*, though in *Where to Go from Here?*, though in *Schools Action Group*. This is a superficial book at a group of teachers in a comprehensive school, the subject-matter will find little to hold their attention.

by Ron Brookes. Blackie. £1.10. (216 89523 5)

PAMULA BROWN: *Summer of a Festival*. Leicester: Blackbush Press. £1.05. (340 15837 9)

NADA COMPTON-PRIDMORE: *Where to Go from Here?*. Illustrated by Susan Rice. Oxford University Press. £1.25. (271333 7)

JOSEPHINE POOLE: *Where to Go from Here?*. Leicester: Bantam Press. £1.05. (340 15837 9)

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magic has still a real and important place in our stories... [but] it is real in places as well as in the spirits at the edge of the darkness of a pool or the darkness of a mountain...

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to an old harper dying in a home. Their respective parents are given in turn their hearts' delight (Rufus, for instance, is made to recognize his potential as a writer, while Drusilla somewhat curiously overcomes her timidity and romps with lions, like Lycia in Blake's "Little Girl Lost"; Miss Clarke makes all the right archetypal noises). At the same time they fall under the evil shadow of Silenus's all-time enemy, the gorgon Medusa. The book culminates in a battle between their rival forces, in which the whole town is involved. It is very effectively done; and yet... perhaps Miss Clarke chose the wrong gods; Roman gods always were pale shadows of the Greek ones. At any rate one remembers the twelve Brontë soldiers of *The Twelve* and the Genii as much more essential, elemental presences.

Now three Celtic books: Orkney and Ireland, respectively. The two quieter ones first, neither very long,

They go on foot, across rough country; the old man plays the harp and dies; that is all. But it is moving and believable, particularly the growth of understanding between the at first unwilling and mutually suspicious partners, step-brother and sister.

Another Orkney book, *The Wheel of the Finfolk*, is a much richer mixture, though therein lies its weakness. R. E. Jackson is a marvellous writer, and as good as ever in this story of the sinister spinning-wheel on which the equally sinister but tragic Finwoman is trying to weave a shawl by which she can retain her human beauty and human lover. The family and domestic setting is excellently drawn, too. One has no complaint about content, merely form, for as in many of R. E. Jackson's books, it is muddled and elusive. The characters are there, and should be good, but pass unnoticed because you have missed some rather vaguely planted clue, or because it has not been led up to with any kind of conviction. A pity because otherwise this is so subtle, evocative and good.

Josephine Poole controls her story, *Billy Buck*, rather better; it is a variation on the theme of the ancient, ritual and sacrificial horn-dance, this time initiated by a Mr Bogle, came, nominally, to tutor a boy recovering from illness; but otherwise Billy Buck, the devil himself. It is properly and effectively sinister. The main characters are perhaps somewhat peripheral—though the boy is not badly drawn; but Billy Buck is not really interested in him—only abandons him to die in a burning house because he is troublesome; the ritual victim is elsewhere. And the other two, his sister and her fiancé, are too pallid to justify the hate the villagers feel. The strength of this book is very much more in its ritual, the primitive hates and fears worked up among the villagers by Billy Buck, in the scenes where a whole community stirs and then erupts. Josephine Poole knows how to use words and imagery to give a skillful juggling of chilling detail and panoramic impression.

Finally a book by a new writer, Nina Banchcroft: *Well Met by Witchlight*. It contains by far the most masterly creation here, the little rosy witch Mary, a marvellous and original character. She is a white witch, rooted in English country lore, able to do the things white witches traditionally can—fly on broomsticks, tame animals, raise wind and water, change her shape, counteract and break the spells of black witches; here one Mrs Bella Black, the witch whom at the climax of the story she confronts and defeats. Not only the evil, but also, much more rarely, the good, is wholly powerful and believable. Mary is not only old and wise, she is also a true innocent, delighting as simply in her own magical achievements as the children who befriend her; and, despite all her powers, needing encouragement and comfort as anyone might—as Sarah, the eldest child realizes with surprise, regretting often the love and understanding and friendship that she has had to learn to live in order to attend to those powers. The book touches on real human truths. Mary says:

"It's been a long road and a lonely one. If you were dear in a field of sleep you wouldn't want to be a sheep. But you'd miss the other deer that have wandered elsewhere, and you'd fear the hunters. You'd be more sensitive and nervous, even if you could run faster."

So does Robina Beckles Willson's *The Last Harper*. It is softer, less knit to its Irish landscape perhaps, but in a way more particularly human. Two children take an ancient harp—which plays ancient tunes that only the boy can hear—

not perhaps this writer's successful book—the varying of magic she uses to dominate her point make for a bit of a jangle. It lacks the intensity of, say, *I Own the Country*, or more relevantly that of the *Aboriginal Magic* takes without the element of didacticism as here. Still, it is in its way and often are few changes apart from the usual, but over the years, the book has become less a guide—with Fishing, Cohn, and Stamp collecting now gone—and more a basic quick reference tool. As a secondary school text it is excellent. This *Encyclopaedia* is an invaluable aid to the student's study.

That it is only a first aid and that it has been a long time since the book was last revised is a pity. The book has been a long time since the book was last revised. The book has been a long time since the book was last revised.

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Now three Celtic books: Orkney and Ireland, respectively. The two quieter ones first, neither very long,

They go on foot, across rough country; the old man plays the harp and dies; that is all. But it is moving and believable, particularly the growth of understanding between the at first unwilling and mutually suspicious partners, step-brother and sister.

Another Orkney book, *The Wheel of the Finfolk*, is a much richer mixture, though therein lies its weakness. R. E. Jackson is a marvellous writer, and as good as ever in this story of the sinister spinning-wheel on which the equally sinister but tragic Finwoman is trying to weave a shawl by which she can retain her human beauty and human lover. The family and domestic setting is excellently drawn, too. One has no complaint about content, merely form, for as in many of R. E. Jackson's books, it is muddled and elusive. The characters are there, and should be good, but pass unnoticed because you have missed some rather vaguely planted clue, or because it has not been led up to with any kind of conviction. A pity because otherwise this is so subtle, evocative and good.

Josephine Poole controls her story, *Billy Buck*, rather better; it is a variation on the theme of the ancient, ritual and sacrificial horn-dance, this time initiated by a Mr Bogle, came, nominally, to tutor a boy recovering from illness; but otherwise Billy Buck, the devil himself. It is properly and effectively sinister. The main characters are perhaps somewhat peripheral—though the boy is not badly drawn; but Billy Buck is not really interested in him—only abandons him to die in a burning house because he is troublesome; the ritual victim is elsewhere. And the other two, his sister and her fiancé, are too pallid to justify the hate the villagers feel. The strength of this book is very much more in its ritual, the primitive hates and fears worked up among the villagers by Billy Buck, in the scenes where a whole community stirs and then erupts. Josephine Poole knows how to use words and imagery to give a skillful juggling of chilling detail and panoramic impression.

Finally a book by a new writer, Nina Banchcroft: *Well Met by Witchlight*. It contains by far the most masterly creation here, the little rosy witch Mary, a marvellous and original character. She is a white witch, rooted in English country lore, able to do the things white witches traditionally can—fly on broomsticks, tame animals, raise wind and water, change her shape, counteract and break the spells of black witches; here one Mrs Bella Black, the witch whom at the climax of the story she confronts and defeats. Not only the evil, but also, much more rarely, the good, is wholly powerful and believable. Mary is not only old and wise, she is also a true innocent, delighting as simply in her own magical achievements as the children who befriend her; and, despite all her powers, needing encouragement and comfort as anyone might—as Sarah, the eldest child realizes with surprise, regretting often the love and understanding and friendship that she has had to learn to live in order to attend to those powers. The book touches on real human truths. Mary says:

"It's been a long road and a lonely one. If you were dear in a field of sleep you wouldn't want to be a sheep. But you'd miss the other deer that have wandered elsewhere, and you'd fear the hunters. You'd be more sensitive and nervous, even if you could run faster."

So does Robina Beckles Willson's *The Last Harper*. It is softer, less knit to its Irish landscape perhaps, but in a way more particularly human. Two children take an ancient harp—which plays ancient tunes that only the boy can hear—

not perhaps this writer's successful book—the varying of magic she uses to dominate her point make for a bit of a jangle. It lacks the intensity of, say, *I Own the Country*, or more relevantly that of the *Aboriginal Magic* takes without the element of didacticism as here. Still, it is in its way and often are few changes apart from the usual, but over the years, the book has become less a guide—with Fishing, Cohn, and Stamp collecting now gone—and more a basic quick reference tool. As a secondary school text it is excellent. This *Encyclopaedia* is an invaluable aid to the student's study.

That it is only a first aid and that it has been a long time since the book was last revised is a pity. The book has been a long time since the book was last revised. The book has been a long time since the book was last revised.

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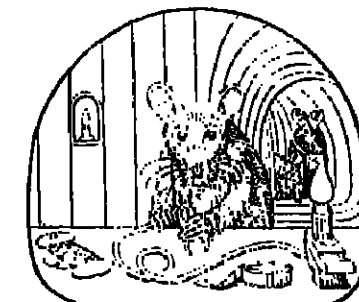
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GOLLANGZ BOOKS



'MRS FRISBY & THE RATS OF NIMH'

Pictures worth looking at twice

ORIGINALITY in children's books is an elusive quality in the here and now. It shines unmistakably out of the past, but in the present it often seems impossible to pick out the glossy first-rate book from the host of glossy second-rate ones. Now and then, however, a fresh voice, or a new twist to an old theme, may convince us that we are dealing with an author who has something entirely his own to say to children.

Ezra Jack Keats is certainly no new voice, but the consistency with which he transmits the everyday life of poor American children living in seedy city apartment buildings into something rich and teeming with possibilities has established him as one of the most exciting contemporary makers of picture books. *Pet Show!*, his latest story about the group of children to which Peter, the owner of Willy the dachshund, belongs, is a warm, funny story, set against Mr Keats's usual backdrop of gaping trashcans, walls thick with juvenile graffiti and rows of old doors set up as temporary partitions. This book is about Archie, who cannot find his cat when the time for the pet show arrives, and brings instead a jar containing a germ called Al, who wins the blue ribbon for the quietest pet at the show. Apt 3, by the same author, is a haunting story with a similar setting, but probably with more appeal to a slightly higher age-group—say, the six to eight year olds. On a rainy day, Sam hears harmonica music coming from somewhere in the apartment building where he lives:

It filled him with sad and lonely feelings—like the rain outside. He had heard that music before. Each time it was different. "Who's that playing?" Sam wondered.

He and his brother Ben set off to find the source of the music and as they search we see through their eyes a little of the life of the building. Eventually they track down the harmonica player—the blind man in Apt 3. They are scared and he is defensive, suspecting their motives for intrusion, but somehow overtures of friendship are made, and the book ends on a note of tremendous promise. In contrast with the pictures for *Pet Show!* which are vividly coloured and full of the kind of incidental detail children love to pick out when picture books are being read to them, Mr Keats's illustrations to



From *Do You Have the Time, Lydia?*

Apt 3 are sombre and muted, enlivened by only occasional flashes of colour, faithfully reproducing the downbeat note of the story.

There is a different kind of originality in Polly Donnison's *William the Dragon*—the originality of the forthright eleven-year-old who decided that she had a much better idea than most adult authors of what small children like to read. The story starts when Jennifer, Lady William's Willemont's maid, finds Henrietta the hen sitting on an enormous green speckled egg ("Bless my soul", said Jennifer. "How ever did our Henrietta manage that?"), and, going on to describe the hatching of William and an assortment of events in his life in the lap of the aristocracy, observation that would stand comparison with Daisy Ashford's *Mrs Donnelly's* admirable brevity, her almost total avoidance of juvenile witticisms and her sure-fire instinct for what makes a good illustration

combine to make a most satisfactory picture book.

Plenty of children write books, but few are fortunate enough to get them published. George Ward, the schoolboy author of *Alphonse*, was lucky to have for father an established artist who could give his story the illustrations it deserved, but the writer would need to feel ashamed. Alphonse is a travelling conjurer extraordinary, who not only does all the run-of-the-mill tricks but also exhibits a mysterious black box, given to his great grandfather by the Emperor of Siam:

Alphonse opened the box and whispered to it in a strange language. The box started bubbling, and out of it came a picture of a Chinaman, a bowl of strange fish, a brightly-coloured bird, a ball that glowed, a unicorn which floated away in the air, and many other curious things.

The plot deals with the capture of a pair of burglars, but the book's chief appeal lies in the atmosphere of mystery and magic that it creates. John Ward's illustrations, delicately drawn and coloured, make the most of this atmosphere, painting at the same time a pleasant and romantic picture of the small Herefordshire village in which the story is set.

Romance is the keynote of Robert and Gordon Davey's latest joint production, *The Captain Goes Hunting*. The Captain, a dashing, moustachioed equestrian figure, riding home from what must be the Napoleonic wars, stops in a village to ask a small boy the way to a tavern:

The boy just stood there with mouth agape, spell-bound in wide-eyed wonder and amazement, before the splendid sight.

Muttering impatiently beneath his breath, the Captain was urging his mare forward when suddenly the small face staring up at him lit up in a dazzling smile.

"Please may I have a ride on your horse?"

He gets his ride, of course, because the world of the Davey brothers is one in which the impossible thing, the romantic thing, always happens in the natural course of events. The tale of how the Captain helps the boy to capture a nonpareil among butterflies is told with as much drama as if it were a full-scale battle campaign, and the illustrations are as delightfully flamboyant as the text.

If anything, *The Giant Jam Sandwich*, by John Vernon Lord and Janet Burroway, is even more preposterous. A plague of four million wasps calls for something rather special in the way of wasp traps, and Miss Burroway's verse describes with relish the monumental scene on which the villagers of Itching Down set about constructing the enormous sandwich in which the wasps are to meet their end:

... eight fine horses pulled the bread spread. To where the picnic cloth was spread. A truck drew up and dumped out butter. And they spread it out with a flap and a flutter. Spoons and spades! Slap and slam! And they did the same with the strawberry jam.

Mr Lord's intricate, vigorous illustrations generously repay minute

examination, and you can be sure that you have seen something they have to show, and that they do so with a sense of humour and with complex mechanical

Originality, however, necessarily a matter of taste. Like Ezra Jack Keats, Ness has a gift for the ordinary on a new and original plane. The setting of *Do You Have the Time, Lydia?* is a small island in the middle of a noisy sea, a happy rich pink and golden land, but the story itself is one that happens anywhere. Lydia is a busy girl, painting pictures, books, hammering nails, sewing clothes, and cakes, that she never gets any of her enterprises. The story of how she organizes her many activities is told, and illustrated, in a satisfying style.

Kirsty at the Lodge, Patrick's first book for about another ordinary day, is a story of a boy who goes away to sea, making his way back to the lodge and home, and later, home—but as a celebration of the rapport between the two worlds, the book is a full-scale battle campaign, and the illustrations are as delightfully flamboyant as the text.

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examination, and you can be sure that you have seen something they have to show, and that they do so with a sense of humour and with complex mechanical

In the Garden of Eden

say, they manage to preserve themselves at the eleventh hour. The text is richly interlarded with beautifully detailed illustrations showing the nice indulging in all manner of fascinating activities, from polishing brasses and staggering about with huge piles of confetti to rolling up a burglar in a carpet. Graham Oakley shows in this book how effectively words and pictures can be grafted together so that our understanding of the story depends on the combination of the two.



From *The Church Mouse*

The lion-and-mouse theme crops up again in William Steig's *Amos and Boris*, with the difference that, while Amos is a mouse, Boris, his unlikely friend, is a whale. The story of how each of these oddly assorted creatures is able to help the other in his hour of need is told with considerable wit, but with, at the same time, a feeling of romance and high seriousness that should make the book a memorable experience for the four to five-year-old. The author's quiet-coloured wash illustrations are strong in atmosphere and pleasantly free of gimmicks.

Another touching story of mutual help between great and small is told in Erika Kristina's *The Lion and the Bird's Nest*. Jojo the lion is King of the Jungle and as he grows older he is oppressed by the loneliness of his position. However, a disinterested act of kindness towards a small bird assures him of a peaceful old age,

surrounded by trusting friends. This melancholy but essentially reassuring tale is illustrated by Chiyoko Nakatani with paintings that faithfully echo its every mood, beginning with stark contrasts of colour indicative of the gulf that fear has created between Jojo and the weaker animals, and ending in a golden glow as peace and understanding are established.

In Roger Duvoisin's stories accord among the animals is generally the rule, but sometimes the human characters take a while to get hold of the right end of the stick. When Herbie the duck brings a crocodile to live in Farmer Sweetpea's barnyard there is a brief moment of panic among the other animals, but they are quick to recognize the friendly intentions of the newcomer. Mrs Sweetpeas, however, is terrified when he appears out of a pile of hay and gives her his sweetest smile, and it is only after a long siege that he finally wins her heart. *The Crocodile in the Tree* is as kindly and humorous as all Mr Duvoisin's books, and his pictures are a riot of colour and activity.

William Papps's *The Long-Haired Donkey* is the story of Vol-Bol, who, having won his own freedom, leads all the other donkeys away from their home in a Greek village to run wild in the hills. However, far from being a fable about concord and co-operation, this book is about an arrogant individualist whose revolutionary impulses arise from boredom. If the story has a moral, it is that there is no true freedom since there can be no permanent escape from the shackles of routine. The author's drawings are brisk and vivid, giving lively expression to the anarchic spirit of his hero.

The deadly effect of routine is further explored in Michael Bond's entertaining new story, *The Day the Animals Went on Strike*. The animals here are upset not by their unchanging daily life, but by the appalling regularity with which visitors to the zoo churn out the same old jokes about them: the elephant's feet would make good waste-paper baskets; the camel has the hump; no gnus is good gnus. They decide to take strike action—killing the jokes dead by sitting still and staring into space. The visitors fail to understand what it is all about, but the animals derive a good deal of pleasure from observing the antics of the humans, who go to great lengths in trying to provoke them to some kind of reaction. Animals give rise to some

friendly laughter in Judith and Roy Barrott's comic fantasy, *Animals Should Definitely Not Wear Clothing*. The reasons for this proposition are laid out page by page in large print, each of them accompanied by its own beautifully explanatory picture. Small children will be delighted by the sweltering sheep, the snake wriggling away from its trousers and the kangaroo bewildered by the acquisition of an extra pocket.

Animal Hide-and-Seek, by Annette Tison and Talus Taylor, the creators of the popular Barbapapa, is also about outer coverings, but the object of this book is to demonstrate the workings of natural camouflage. Angelo, an ardent entomologist, accompanied by Herbie, his dog, goes on an expedition in search of rare insects, and on his return he gives a slide show of the expedition for his friends. The pictures show the pair avidly pursuing their small quarry, blissfully ignorant of the larger fauna that are taking an interest in them. Clear plastic printed pages are interleaved with the illustrations in such a way as to deceive the reader as well as Angelo, until he lifts the plastic and sees the hidden animals lurking beneath. This fascinating device turns the pictures into a series of astonishing conjuring tricks, and even the illustrations which are not overlaid with plastic produce their surprises when you take another look. Young readers will be both enthralled and painlessly educated.

There is still more painless education to be got from Richard Armour's accomplished collection of light-hearted verses about primates, *All Sizes and Shapes of Monkeys and Apes*. Mr Armour clearly finds his subject completely absorbing,

and he makes no bones about the reason for this:

They look much like us. And they act like us too. They scowl and they smile and they show how they're feeling. There's no other animal quite so appealing.

He manages, too, to pass on a great deal of interesting information:

Long ago the Baboon was beloved by Egyptians. Who portrayed him in statues and written descriptions. Like the king, when he died he was mummified. Now shouldn't that give him a feeling of pride?

But the transmission of facts is not Mr Armour's only aim. His tongue-in-cheek comments even include a mock moral, à la Belloc:

... you'd better take care, when the Chimp is in sight. To do what is good. And what's proper and right. Should you do something bad, you would feel pretty grim. If the Chimp told his playmates, "I learned it from him!"

Paul Galdone's drawings, both amusing and accurate, are excellent. Finally, with Brian Wildsmith's *The Little Wood Duck*, we return to the world of the small and helpless. The little duck of the title has feet of different sizes, so that when he takes to the water he can only swim in circles. His family and all the other animals tease him, but eventually a crisis arises which proves that his deformity has its uses. Mr Wildsmith illustrates his brief narrative with all the gorgeous colour and minute attention to detail that we have come to expect of him.

ROBIN and JOCELYN WILD: *The Mooses who Stole a Zoo*. Heinemann. £1.40. (434 97253 3)

GRAHAM OAKLEY: *The Church Mouse*. Macmillan. £1.50. (333 13259 9)

WILLIAM STEIG: *Amos and Boris*. Hamish Hamilton. £1.40. (240 02291 6)

PAUL PAPAS: *The Long-Haired Donkey*. Oxford University Press. £1.40. (19 279685 2)

MICHAEL BOND: *The Day the Animals Went on Strike*. Illustrated by Jim Hodgson. Studio Vista. £1.25. (289 70187 2)

JUDITH and ROY BARROTT: *Animals Should Definitely Not Wear Clothing*. Kaye and Ward. £1.15. (7182 0930 3)

ANNETTE TISON and TALUS TAYLOR: *Animal Hide-and-Seek*. Warner. £1.25. (7232 1450 6)

RICHARD ARMOUR: *All Sizes and Shapes of Monkeys and Apes*. Illustrated by Paul Galdone. World's Work. £1.05. (437 24004 5)

BRIAN WILDSMITH: *The Little Wood Duck*. Oxford University Press. £1.25. (19 279686 0)



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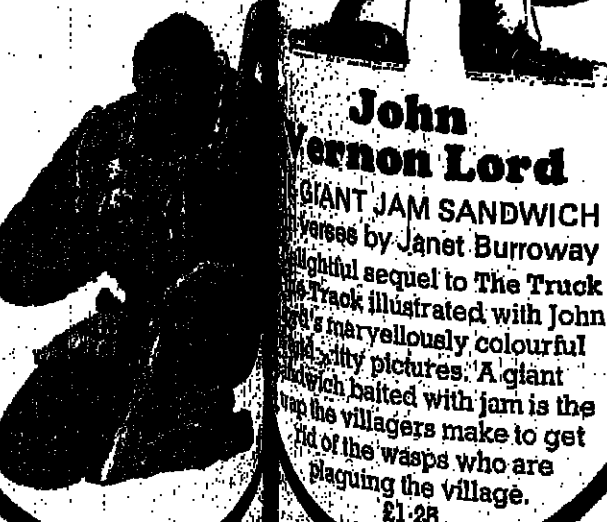
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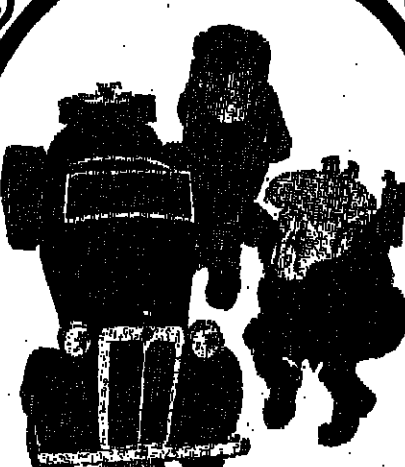
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Minor moral tales

AMONG THE MANY new books for six to nine year olds, there exists a surprising continuity of aim and method, a sense of moral tone which presumably derives from certain shared assumptions about the average young reader's requirements. The majority of stories are set in conscientiously realistic surroundings, in a typical suburban nuclear family, but with all the internal tensions entirely shifted from the parents to the children. Mothers and fathers, the sociologist might observe, are depicted as warm, sympathetic and patient, ready to drop whatever they are doing, while it is only the children who quarrel, sulk, fly into a rage, spoil each other's possessions. There is an implicit didacticism, not teaching, as Victorian children's books did, by the presentation of dreadful punishments but simply through the use of moral opprobrium: "If you will be naughty and wilful, look how you spoil things for yourself." As Ann Staden comments in *Pepper Face and Other Stories*, on Barry who lost the car keys and missed his afternoon's swimming:

Poor Barry! But that unfortunate afternoon did teach him a lesson. I don't think they will be an eager to fiddle with keys in the future.

For slightly older children, the improving tone is given a different slant, and the lesson is taught not by warnings but by example. Quarrelsome friends and siblings unite to turn up trumps when the crunch comes (although their conscientious authors would never put it that way), by rescuing birds, animals, trees, old ladies, or, at a pinch, football teams or even their younger brothers, from imminent disaster. How for a series, such as the Gazebo and Antelope books from Hamish Hamilton, or Heinemann's new Red Apple imprint, imposes some such wholesome brief on its authors is difficult to tell. While it is undoubtedly widespread, these series may well have contributed to this new moral tone, just as they have most certainly been responsible for maintaining a very high standard of writing, though not invariably of illustration. Is this what children want? While clearly most child readers come essentially from a middle-class background, do they really want doctrines of parental infallibility and security, and stories that distort life's essential injustices to make a moral point? For all their painstaking truth to children's speech and mannerisms, a certain number of the books in these series, as well as elsewhere, give such a highly selected version of reality as to be both unrealistic and often, frankly, dull.

Barry Willard's *The Dragon Box* is outstanding among the new Gazeboes because it does not follow this pattern. It describes a lonely child in Edwardian London, and the mingled pleasure and pain brought him by the box from the land of the dragon. More typical of the series, but happily free from any suspicion of didacticism, is Don Taylor's *The Jungle Picture*. The Antelope series, intended for a higher age group, include Ellis Dillon's *The Five Hundred* (a Fiat, of course), a rollicking, if unlikely, adventure set near Rome, and Pamela Rogers's *The Weekend*. This is a delicately

imagined story of an institution child finding a home.

One book which rises triumphantly above both realism and moralizing is Ursula Moray Williams's *The Kidnapping of my Grandmother*, from Heinemann's Red Apple collection. It is an enchanting book, full of humour and charm, and the kind of



From *The Bear and the People*

effortless artistry that is as rare as it is satisfying. Its final words, "In case you want to know, Amiko was me", establish its credentials as effortlessly as the rest of the book establishes mood and pace.

While book series are useful to publisher and author, parent and librarian, children are more interested in sequels than in series, and younger readers particularly enjoy the latest adventures of an old favourite. They rapidly learn to experience a collector's pride in owning all the books about a particular character. For their enthusiasm, there are recent additions to the seemingly endless histories of Bobby Brewster (*Bobby Brewster's Bee*) and Henry the Helicopter (*Henry in the Mountains*). More entertaining and up to date is Jennifer Wayne's indomitable Sprout, who makes a welcome third appearance in *Sprout and the Dogstiter*. The continuing saga of Nougini the Nig has happily produced two more volumes, *The Game and The Monster*, as attractively written and illustrated as their predecessors.

Not exactly a sequel to anything, but apparently familiar because of its heavy debts to Doctor Doolittle and Professor Branestawm, is Andrew Davies's *The Fantastic Feats of Doctor Boox*. This might well be popular in some quarters, though the literal-minded will be disturbed by its total disregard for fact—you can't take dogs, let alone a gorilla, into a restaurant and More obviously, *Patsy-O* and his *Wonderful Pets* by Bryan MacMahon. This is a perfect tale for reading aloud, with its repetitive, rhythmic prose style; perhaps, ideally, it calls for an Irish brogue.

ANN STADEN: *Pepper Face and other Stories*. Illustrated by Carolyn Dillon. Faber, £1.25. (S71 09893 2)
BARBARA WILLARD: *The Dragon Box*. Illustrated by Tessa Jordan. (Gazelle). (241 02148 0)
DON TAYLOR: *The Jungle Picture*. Illustrated by Mary Dinsdale. (Gazelle). (241 02211 8)
Hamish Hamilton. 40p each.

ELLIS DILLON: *The Five Hundred*. Illustrated by Gareth Floyd. (Antelope). (241 02149 9)
PAMELA ROGERS: *The Weekend*. Illustrated by Tessa Jordan. (Antelope). (241 02088 3)
Hamish Hamilton. 60p each.

URSULA MORAY WILLIAMS: *The Kidnapping of my Grandmother*. Illustrated by Mike Jackson. (Red Apple). Heinemann. 85p. (434 95869 7)

R. E. TONN: *Bobby Brewster's Bee*. Illustrated by Lilith Norman. Brockhampton Press. 90p. (340 15974)

DON TAYLOR: *Henry in the Mountains*. Illustrated by Biro. Loecster. Brockhampton Press. 60p. (340 15838 7)

JENNIFER WAYNE: *Sprout and the Dogstiter*. Illustrated by Margaret Palmer. Heinemann. £1.20. (434 97201 0)

OLIVER POSTGATE and PETER FIRMIN: *The Saga of Nougini the Nig. 9: The Game* (7182 0298 8) 10: *The Monster* (7182 0299 6) Kaye and Ward. 45p each.

ANDREW DAVIES: *The Fantastic Feats of Doctor Boox*. Illustrated by Tony Scott. Collins. £1.25. (00 195154 8)

BRYAN MACMAHON: *Patsy-O and his Wonderful Pets*. Illustrated by Wendy Goble. Chaffin St. Giles. Richard Sadler. 90p. (85410 019 9)

MARGARET J. MILLER: *Henry the Helicopter*. Illustrated by Janine Ede. Loecster. Brockhampton Press. 60p. (340 04071 8)

BARBARA SORLEY: *Coranum*. Illustrated by Margaret Wetherbee. (Gonnell). Hutchinson. 90p. (09 110500 5)

ANN THWAITE (Editor): *Alfonso 5*. Illustrated. Macmillan. £1.60. (333 74722 9)

FANTASY AND POETRY

Mythful thinking

JOHN DUNN: *The Light Mare*. (333 13335 8) £1.50

attractions of "mythic" writing for the young are strong; the natural has produced winners of kinds so that stories in which normal laws of nature are altered or amended lure authors of fanciful realism which some may even think creators. The very success of these makes it harder for each to break into the new circle.

JOHN DUNN, however, would be a natural, for in his about children's poetry, *The Light Mare*, he showed his sense of "the fertile image" as the body it forth.

Many children seem to seek a point in the narrative; from a naive desire to shock, because it is fashionable to be such a standpoint, but because they are directly and personally concerned with and horror and are in the

Poetry for children



Mr. Bidery's Spidery Garden

It is absolutely essential that there be a deep and first-hand knowledge of children, and of childhood, and that they should be understood what it means to be a child, rather than childish, and how all to be like children themselves.

LEONARD CLARK: *Secret as Tails*. (7011 5002 3)

EDWARD LOWBURY: *Green Magic*. Illustrated by Peter Bland. (7011 0480 5)

CHATTO and WINDUS. 65p each.

CHRIS SHARLX (Compiler): *Fire Words*. Cape. £1.50. (224 00764 5) (Paperback, 50p)

DAVID MCCORD: *Mr Bidery's Spidery Garden*. Illustrated by Henry B. Kane. Harp. £1.40. (245 51003 6)

GEORGE BARKER: *The Alphabetical Zon*. Illustrated by Krystyna Roland. Faber. £1.30. (571 09892 4)

CARA LOCKHART SMITH: *Riding to Cananville*. Hamish Hamilton. £1.25. (241 02158 8)

DAVID ROSS (Editor): *The Illustrated Treasury of Poetry for Children*. Collins. £2.95. (00 106134 6)

process of coming to terms with them.

His first novel for (older) children, *Firefang*, seems to grow out of this concern.

It tells of the metamorphosis of the village of Clutchpenny, where the inhabitants, mean as their names suggest, awake one morning to find that their village has sunk into a bubble of mud from which there seems to be no means of escape. As their plight worsens, the mayor's apprentice, aided by the magic of Betty Clutchpenny, faces the fiery dragon and the village is redeemed. The details are more subtle than this outline suggests and the subject matter is sound fairy-tale, perhaps meant for those who haven't met it at an earlier age. The author's language is strongly poetic; some parts are splendidly evocative and the expressive quality of the writing draws the reader where the action stops. Read aloud, the prose proves itself, yet the narrative just fails to grip and seems to be manipulated at a distance so that while the reader is intrigued, he is rarely moved.

It is true that the best fairy stories deal with circumstances beyond the limits of imaginable experience, and *Firefang* does that. But one fails to engage with the face of Elijah Genesis, Alfred Sud-

labelled "for the Young". Such readers are already deep in Brim Patten, Alan Jackson and Jeff Nuttall (as it were). *Clutchpenny*, faces the folk-tale and of Grimm, yet the effect is of great originality.

Small boys as well as girls read full for stories about soft furry animals, so here are two that are bound to give a great deal of pleasure. Margaret J. Miller's *Mouse Tail* tells of a suburban family life again, this time at waistcoat level, but it is read with a redeeming humour and energy. *Geranium* by Barbara Soley is a straightforward account of the adventures of a ginger kitten belonging to a childless couple. It is a once charming and utterly free sentimentalism. Margaret Wetherbee's evocative illustrations contribute greatly to the book's success.

Alfonso 5 is always good, offering various forms of entertainment. Volume 5, like its predecessors, is well written and illustrated by a number of outstanding contributors.

DAVID MCCORD: *Mr Bidery's Spidery Garden*. Illustrated by Henry B. Kane. Harp. £1.40. (245 51003 6)

GEORGE BARKER: *The Alphabetical Zon*. Illustrated by Krystyna Roland. Faber. £1.30. (571 09892 4)

CARA LOCKHART SMITH: *Riding to Cananville*. Hamish Hamilton. £1.25. (241 02158 8)

DAVID ROSS (Editor): *The Illustrated Treasury of Poetry for Children*. Collins. £2.95. (00 106134 6)

And also... JOHN SMITH (Compiler): *My Kind of Rhymes*. Illustrated by Beryl Sanders. Burke. 85p. (222 00055 4)

With its large print and simple illustrations, this is intended for the very young. All the poems have a song-like quality without being restricted to mere nursery rhymes. As well as old favourites, there are some unexpected names (Anne Brontë, Margaret, and Günter Grass, for instance).

DENNIS SAUNDERS (Compiler): *Out of School*. Illustrated by Desmond Clover. Evans. 85p. (237 35100 0) (Paperback, 35p)

In his introduction, Dennis Saunders addresses his child readers (so often introductions are written for adults). This is typical of the flavour of this anthology. The poems are chosen because their subjects will appeal to the child's world, and some are actually by children.

Hogglespike and Thistle

Patricia Drew

In this happy sequel to the author's popular *Hogglespike*, the hedgehog finds it easier to build himself a smart new home than to find a wife to share it.

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Ride a Cock-Horse

Mervyn Peake

... a reissue, 32 years after first publication, and a welcome one. Mervyn Peake brings a strangeness and wonder into the familiar world of the old nursery rhyme. A haunting book... John Rowe Townsend (Smiths Trade News)

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Enid Marx

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By Annette Tison and Talus Taylor

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ALBION DE LA MARE (Compiler):
Catalogue of the Collection of
Medieval Manuscripts bequeathed to
the Bodleian Library, Oxford, by
James P. A. Lyell.

466pp plus 41 plates. Clarendon
Press: Oxford University Press, 1972.

Great public collections in this country have always depended on the generosity of individuals and the Bodleian Library as much as any. This catalogue, by Albion de la Mare of the Department of Western Manuscripts, is a worthy monument to the magnificent bequest made to the library in 1949 by James Lyell of a choice of a hundred of his manuscripts. The hundred chosen were all medieval, though others purchased from the executors, including some post-medieval items, are included here. Almost all were acquired by Lyell between 1936 and 1946 before the present upward spiral of prices began, and a list included in the catalogue shows that the most he ever paid for a manuscript was £100. If the sum-total of the hundred manuscripts of rather over £7,000 were multiplied by twenty, it would still produce a conservative estimate of what the collection would cost today.

In a preface based on his inaugural Lyell lecture (an annual series delivered at Oxford, which was founded from the residue of the estate) N. R. K. discusses the collector and his collection. Lyell was no magpie but a careful, canny buyer with a clear idea of what he wanted. The emphasis was on English manuscripts and what interested him was the text, a medieval, if possible original, binding, and a good provenance. Though he owned some handsome books, there are no luxury copies, bought solely for script or illumination. This just as seventeenth and eighteenth-century topographical and antiquarian interests, or nineteenth-century collections, a new appreciation of medieval illumination, the Lyell collection showed a concern with the manuscript book as a whole, which is of its time. Now labelled as the codicological approach this has an older tradition in this country than some continental aficionados are willing to allow.

Dr de la Mare's descriptions meet the two essential requirements of a good catalogue entry. They describe fully and accurately the textual contents and the physical make-up of each manuscript, and they outline briefly its place in a broader context. The bibliographical material cited, the lists of incipits, the lengthy index of manuscripts used for comparison, and the index of former owners will make the catalogue a most useful work of reference for the study of other collections. In addition, many of the descriptions extend our knowledge and will serve as a point of departure for further inquiry. Two examples are the entries for manuscript 33, a roll chronicle of the Kings of England belonging to a group of interesting manuscripts which are usually datable and the history of whose illumination ought to be studied; and for manuscript 54, a complicated collection of computational texts, many of which are accompanied by diagrams.

Though Dr de la Mare acknowledges the help of numerous scholars, and especially of the Keeper of Western Manuscripts, R. W. Hunt, the catalogue is the product of her own exceptional ability and perseverance. She has the gift of ferreting out clues in a manuscript and following them to their solution. The paleographical knowledge and skill shown in recognizing and deciphering script are equally impressive. The entries for the humanistic manuscripts, for example the Cicero shown to be written in part by Martin Tonnelli, demonstrate this in Dr de la Mare's own particular field of interest. Other striking instances are the identification of a manuscript from Lambach, manuscript 55, and the discovery of notes probably written by Nicholas of Cusa in manuscript 52. By a strange coincidence another manuscript, manuscript 54, with a quite different provenance also contains annotations in his hand.

The Lyell catalogue shows how vital it is that great libraries should continue to have scholars on their staff, who are not exclusively concerned with the everyday running of the library. They have a duty not only to readers in the library but to the wider circle of scholars unable to come in person and also to future generations, which they can fulfil only with published work. They must, therefore, be given time to study their own collections, to visit others, and to pursue their own researches. A further beneficial result, as the Lyell bequest shows, may be the benefactions of collectors who find their taste stimulated or their interests shared.

Paper-backs

Art and Architecture

Beardley's Illustrations for "Le Mort d'Arthur". Edited by Edmund V. Gillon Jr. (Dover, £1.50). Jean Cocteau: Drawings. Edited by Edouard Dermot. (Dover, £1.50).

E. A. Fisher: Saxon Churches of Sussex. (David and Charles, £1.50).

John Held Jr.: The Wages of Sin, and Other Victorian Woes and Sorrows. (Dover, £1.25).

Raymond Lister: Decorative Wrought Ironwork in Great Britain. (David and Charles, £1.50).

Fritz Novotny: Painting and Sculpture in Europe 1780-1880. (The Pelican History of Art.) (Penguin, £3). Pascin: 110 Drawings. Edited by Alfred Werner. (Dover, £1.25).

Bibliography and Memoirs

George Bailey: The Strauss Family. (Pan, 50p). Daisy Bates: The Passing of the Aborigines. (Panther, 40p).

Nicholas Monsarrat: Life is a Four-Letter Word. 2 vols. (Pan, 50p each). Jasper Ridley: Lord Palmerston. (Panther, 90p).

Drama

William Shakespeare: The

Comedies. (Pan, 45p). G. K. Ogden and

Alfred Hitchcock: The

Comedies. (Pan, 45p).

Alfred Hitchcock: The

Comedies. (Pan, 45p).

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Alfred Hitchcock: The

Comedies. (Pan, 45p).

ALLEN HUTT:
Fournier: The Compleat Typographer.

89pp. Muller, £1.50.

Fournier was indeed "the compleat typographer", and James Moran chose well to commission this study of that great eighteenth-century Frenchman for the first volume in his new "Ars Typographica Library". Other titles will deal with "historically important printers, typesetters, type designers, etc., as well as tendencies in the art of printing itself. But what makes the choice of Fournier so welcome is that this one individual was so important in both type designing, type founding and printing. And what makes Allen Hutt so happy a choice for this theme is that he has long experience of letterpress printing and a deep interest in French history. Mr Moran set out to find a writer who was "neither pedant nor popularizer", and he has succeeded.

The monograph is written in a brisk, and at times racy style which

makes light of much patient checking of the original documents. Mr Hutt has found that some of his sources were misinterpreted or mistranslated by earlier writers such as Beatrice Wardle and D. B. Updike. And if Mr Hutt elects to be stinging about some of Updike's views, it has to be admitted that these were decidedly Waspyish on occasions.

In case any reader is confused about which of the Fourniers is the subject of the work under review, it must be explained that it is that Fournier who lived 1712-48 and who was variously known as Pierre Simon, or Simon Pierre, or Fournier le Jeune. In his family these appellations were not strictly controlled, but he was the only member to distinguish himself as the creator of a first typographical point system of measurement, and as both the designer and punch-cutter of some 4,600 splendid characters, all shown in a magnificent specimen book prepared while he was still in his late twenties. Fournier also produced a superb pioneer two-volume *Manuel typographique* and wrote a number of curious tracts. He exerted a powerful influence on his contemporaries

and successors at home and abroad.

Mr Hutt's observant and laconic monograph is a good reproduction of a good reproduction of a good reproduction (only those at page 69 are inferior). The text has been composed in two Montytype recuttings of Fournier's own type, and is set in a beautiful, with a selection of some of his own masterpieces of calligraphy. This year's Saturday Review goes its usual way, with a collection of writings and illustrations all set forth at its accustomed level of production and design, and handsomely boxed for presentation purposes.

Mr Hutt's keen eye might have detected that the publisher's title on the title-page is not correct. But since the same error appears in the first book of the Nonesuch series, perhaps a happy augury for the success of the new series.

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John Landwehr:
German Emblem Books 1531-1888.
A Bibliography.
184pp. Utrecht: Haantjens Dekker and Gumbert.

As with his earlier studies in the bibliography of emblem books in Holland and the Low Countries, this one bears the marks of meticulous scholarship that we have come to expect from John Landwehr. The catalogue is arranged alphabetically according to authors' names and is preceded by a chronological list of titles. There are 661 entries drawn from libraries in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. Most of the institutions approached by Mr Landwehr responded, we understand, to his requests for information about their holdings of emblem books. Occasionally the answer was not systematically catalogued, and this, one must imagine, reflects lack of staff and financial resources—factors which are not unknown in libraries of this country. They illustrate, moreover, the extent to which the study of emblem books, and the will of librarians who are sometimes unable to offer the proper facilities.

Such criticisms as one may have regarding Mr Landwehr's work spring from quite different considerations. Ought a bibliography to be annotated? If so, to what extent? In this book, and indeed in the

author's other work, a very brief view is taken. Annotation of individual entries is sparse, and the face deals only with technical details. One wonders whether authority is justified, or even whether it is necessary to list the authors' names, which are given in full. Authors' names are given in full, and there are sections on festivities and funerals, theses, polygraph books, and so on.

The comprehensive nature of the index is stressed because this quality disarms any doubt: one may have had regarding the wisdom of arranging by author. There can be no golden rule about the way in which a bibliography is ordered, for both the material itself and the exploitation of it must ultimately dictate the form. In this case the arrangement could have been otherwise, but given such an index it is unlikely that it would have been more effective.

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John Landwehr:
German Emblem Books 1531-1888.
A Bibliography.
184pp. Utrecht: Haantjens Dekker and Gumbert.

As with his earlier studies in the bibliography of emblem books in Holland and the Low Countries, this one bears the marks of meticulous scholarship that we have come to expect from John Landwehr. The catalogue is arranged alphabetically according to authors' names and is preceded by a chronological list of titles. There are 661 entries drawn from libraries in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. Most of the institutions approached by Mr Landwehr responded, we understand, to his requests for information about their holdings of emblem books. Occasionally the answer was not systematically catalogued, and this, one must imagine, reflects lack of staff and financial resources—factors which are not unknown in libraries of this country. They illustrate, moreover, the extent to which the study of emblem books, and the will of librarians who are sometimes unable to offer the proper facilities.

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